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MEMORIALS

OF

CAPTAIN HEDLEY VICARS.

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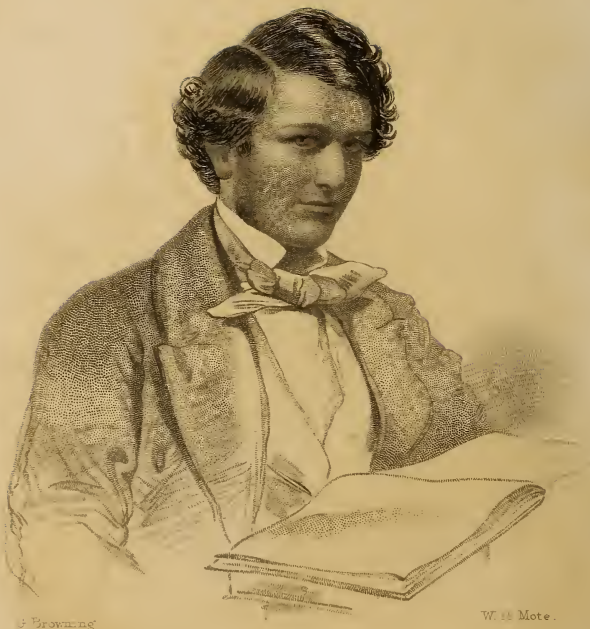

G. Browning. W. H. Mote.

Yours most affectionately
Hedley Vicars

MEMORIALS

OF

CAPTAIN HEDLEY VICARS,

97th Regiment.

Rest thy spirit! At noon from labour cease,
Beside the sheaves thy harvest work is done.
Come from the battle and in peace
Rest thee, for home with thee the fight is won.

LONDON: JAMES NISBET & Co 21, BERNERS STREET.

Marsh, Catherine

MEMORIALS

OF

CAPTAIN HEDLEY VICARS,

NINETY-SEVENTH REGIMENT.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "THE VICTORY WON."

Fiftieth Thousand.

LONDON:
JAMES NISBET AND CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.
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1856a

This Record

OF

THE FAITH OF A SON

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

TO HER WHOM GOD GRACIOUSLY CHOSE

TO SOW IN HIS YOUNG HEART

ITS FIRST IMPERISHABLE SEED.

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PREFACE.

It may strike some who take up this volume, as strange that a memoir should be written of one who was so early cut off, in the flower of his age, that he had scarcely begun the fulfilment of his youthful promise; whose name, till its last honourable mention by his Commander-in-Chief, was little known beyond his own family and an extended circle of friends and comrades.

Why, it may be asked, was he chosen out of the many not less brave or less beloved, who as freely offered up their lives for their country, and whose graves are, like his, far distant upon the shore of the stranger? It is thought that a perusal of the following pages will sufficiently answer this question, and that, by God's blessing, these records of his brief career will not have been preserved in vain.

If any have cast the bread of life upon the restless

waters of some wanderer's heart, and are still waiting and hoping to find it after many days, let them take comfort as they read how the parental prayer and blessing, which seemed to be disregarded, were recalled in the moment of temptation and in a distant scene, were mused upon during lonely midnight watches, and cherished in a close companionship with danger and death.

There are those who, in the face of examples to the contrary, still maintain that entire devotion of the heart to God must withdraw a man from many of the active duties of life, and who would be prepared to concede that in making a good Christian you may spoil a good soldier. To them the subject of this memoir affords a fresh and ample refutation. While so many, whom God's grace has awakened in our Army and Navy, conceive it to be their duty, as they feel it to be their delight, to receive a fresh commission as ministers of the Gospel of Peace, that they may preach at once to others the Name so dear to themselves; and while the weak in faith seek a sphere more sheltered from temptation, he determined upon the wiser and nobler course of standing firm to the colours under which he was already enrolled. When called to God's service, he found his mission-

field in the camp and in the hospital. He lived, during months of sickness and pestilence, to commend the religion he professed to all around him—while he pursued the duties of his profession with distinguished ardour and constancy—maintaining as a Christian a high reputation for bravery among the bravest of his companions in arms, and winning on his first battle-field the blood-stained laurels so soon to be exchanged for the crown of glory that fadeth not away.

These pages may meet the eye of some of the many young Englishmen who have more of Christ's religion in their hearts than they have ever avowed in their lives, whose best feelings are stifled by the atmosphere of the society in which they find themselves, and which they might and ought to elevate and purify. Most grateful to God will the writer of these memorials be, if the courage of any such be exalted and confirmed, and their manly hearts inspired to emulate the noble example of a CHRISTIAN SOLDIER.

CHAPTER I.

Boyhood.

"A noble boy,
A brave, free-hearted, careless one,
Full of uncheck'd, unbidden joy,
Of dread of books, and love of fun;
And with a clear and ready smile
Unshadow'd by a thought of guile."

Willis.

Hedley Shafto Johnstone Vicars was born in the Mauritius, on the 7th of December 1826. His father, an officer in the Royal Engineers, was the representative of the family of Don Vicaro, a Spanish Cavalier who came to England in the suite of Katharine of Arragon, and settled in Ireland early in the sixteenth century, on the marriage of his eldest grandson with the heiress of the Lalor family. The family estate was Levalley, in Queen's County.

There was little to distinguish the early days of Hedley Vicars from those of other healthy high-spirited boys. Active and fearless, he was foremost among his playfellows wherever fun or frolic was to be found. Open-hearted and generous, quick to resent an injury, but ready to forgive, he was a universal favourite with them, whilst his sweetness of temper, and kind, unselfish nature, especially endeared him to his family at home. His faults were those of an energetic and wayward disposition, and those legends which are wont to be preserved in families,

record occcasional instances of his odd and amusing perversity. When the children were gathered around their mother to repeat texts of Scripture in turn, Hedley, refusing to enter into the spirit of the little circle, would contribute nothing but "Remember Lot's wife."

On one occasion, being reproved by his mother for light conduct at family worship, he walked off during the prayer, and ensconced himself in a little cave in the garden, barricading it with the determination of spending the night there, by way of punishing his mother for reproving him in the presence of the assembled family. But after a time, his better nature was touched by the entreaties and caresses of his little sisters, and he returned, softened and penitent, to ask and obtain forgiveness.

Once at the end of the holidays, when he was told to pack up his box for school, resolving to put off the evil day as long as possible, he paid no attention to his mother's repeated injunctions until they became positive commands, no longer to be disregarded. Then he walked away to his room, with an air of insulted dignity, and soon called out, "Mother, my box is packed." On opening the door of her room, she found the box placed there, loosely corded and packed, indeed, but with the housemaid's dust-pan and brushes, and a collection of old boots, shells, stones, and all sorts of rubbish, with which a few of Mrs Vicars'

favourite books were irreverently jumbled; the boy, meanwhile, hanging over the banisters, humming a careless tune, calmly viewed a displeasure, the dignity of which it was not easy to preserve.

Yet in spite of these and similar exhibitions of waywardness, he never caused his mother serious anxiety, in his boyhood, or gave lasting pain to that tender heart, ever knit to his own by the fondest affection.

She was for some years the only guardian of his childhood. Loss of health obliged her to return to England with her children, whilst their father was detained in the Mauritius by military duty. He came home to rejoice the hearts of his family in the year 1835, and died four years afterwards, in the prime of manhood, at Mullingar, West Meath, where he held a military appointment. He was honoured and beloved by the whole neighbourhood.

High-spirited, and fearless for himself, for his sisters Hedley was ever thoughtful, and treated them with invariable gentleness. The tenderness of his boyish years, for all who were under the power of his superior strength, was the germ of that constant consideration and goodness exercised in after-life towards those who were under his command, which drew forth from them an affection meet to illustrate the words, "Peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die."

When the boy was twelve years old, his father's dying hand was laid upon his head, with the earnest prayer, "that he might be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and so fight manfully under his banner as to glorify his holy name."

It might almost seem that faith had given to the departing Christian, as to the aged Jacob, a voice of prophecy. Knows he not now, and will he not yet more perfectly know, in a day for which a groaning creation looketh, how fully a faithful God granted to him this—his last prayer?

From this time Hedley's love for his mother gradually deepened into that peculiar form of protecting tenderness which seems the prerogative of a widow's son, and there grew up with his growth an almost feminine gentleness and a sensitive regard for the feelings of others, which, combined with singular strength and steadfastness of character, rendered the friendship of his matured manhood so precious to those who had the privilege of enjoying it.

To study he had always shewn a marked and positive aversion, and devoted his time to anything rather than to the prescribed form of drudgery. At one school, then newly formed, where he was placed for a year or two, the contagion of his high spirits often carried off the master—himself a young man—from graver pursuits to join in the wild adventures and pranks of his gay and reckless pupil, somewhat to the scandal of their sober neighbours.

This determination not to study followed him to Woolwich, and prevented him from acquiring the distinction necessary to secure a commission in the Engineers or Artillery. All this was seriously regretted by him in after-life, not alone because he thus deprived himself of a more advantageous branch of the service, but also on account of time wasted, which had been given him so to use that he might finally render his account of it with joy.

On Christmas-day 1843, his mother received a letter, announcing that her son had obtained a commission in the line, written by the same hand which, on Good Friday 1855, informed her how faithfully unto death that commission had been fulfilled.

Early in the following spring he commenced his military career by joining the depôt of the 97th Regiment in the Isle of Wight. He was an ardent lover of his profession, and from first to last was devoted to its duties. In writing to his mother an account of his first review, with its fatigues of marching, skirmishing, and firing, he adds, with boyish pride, "But my zeal for the service kept me up."

In the autumn of 1844, he returned home to take leave of his family at Langford Grove, in Essex, before sailing for Corfu. His eldest sister well remembers his joyous bearing as he first exhibited himself to them in the Queen's uniform, and her own admiration of the bright, intelligent countenance, broad

shoulders, and well-knit, athletic figure of her young soldier-brother. A few weeks afterwards he sailed for Corfu—now fairly launched in the world and in a profession beset with temptations.

He still retained the frank demeanour and kind and generous disposition which had distinguished him as a boy, with a keen relish for adventure, and a quick perception of the beautiful in all around him, as his descriptions of scenery sufficiently shew. Gifts are these, lovely in themselves, but dangerous, often fatal, to their possessor, as the wrecks upon many a shoal of life too truly testify.

He had a pleasant and prosperous voyage out; with his usual activity lending a helping hand to the sailors in the work of the ship, and winning their hearts by his genial manners. At Corfu he entered with spirit into all the amusements which offered themselves to him. His letters to his family were now less frequent than ever before or afterwards, and at this period of his life his reckless disposition often led him into scenes of which his conscience disapproved, and to excesses which, though never matured into habits, and, by the grace of God, early and for ever abandoned, were afterwards the subject of bitter and humiliating remembrance. In reference to this he wrote in 1854, "You will be spared poignant remorse in after years by remembering your Creator in the days of your youth. I speak from heartfelt experience. I

would give worlds, if I had them, to undo what I have done."

A single letter will be sufficient to shew that his correspondence was at this time restricted to the details of his outward life :—

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Cephalonia*, 1845.

". . . . Last week I had a delightful trip to Zante, where I was ordered to sit on a court-martial, and remained three days. I never enjoyed a place more. It is a beautiful island, covered with verdure. A wing of the reserved battalion of the 97th is quartered there—two companies in the town, and one in the castle, which is about a mile above it. Clambering up was tedious work, as the hill in some parts is nearly perpendicular. I was, however, well repaid for my trouble on arriving at the summit, where the sight which presented itself to my eyes was most magnificent. On one side of the ramparts you behold the town far below, and the harbour crowded with merchant-vessels of every nation; while in the distance, through the misty haze, appears the dark outline of the Morean hills. Looking in the opposite direction, you see an immense plain thickly planted with vineyards, studded with olive groves and pretty villas, just visible in the distance. Still further, mountains capped with snow form a boundary to the valley."

Soon afterwards he was quartered in the castle at Zante, to his great delight, and his letters convey the same vivid impressions of the beauty of the scenes which surrounded him:—

"Summer is changing the aspect of all around. The plains beneath are already clothed in green; the vines, olives, pomegranates, and hawthorn, with roses, geraniums, and other wild but sweetly-scented flowers, shed their fragrance through the air, and everything looks charming. Zante is a perfect garden of roses. I generally have two or three bouquets in my room. One could hardly have more pleasant quarters."

CHAPTER II.

The Awakening.

"Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless till it resteth in Thee."

St Augustine.

The 97th was ordered to Jamaica in 1848. From Maroon Town he thus writes to his mother:—

"I see it all now. It is I that have caused your illness, my darling mother. Ever since the receipt of your last letter, I have been in a dreadful state of mind. I feel that I deserve God's severest punishment for my undutiful conduct towards the fondest of mothers, but the excruciating thought had never before occurred to me, that He might think fit to remove her from me. Oh, what agony I have endured! what sleepless nights I have passed, since the perusal of that letter! The review of my past life, especially the retrospect of the last two years, has at last quite startled me, and at the same time disgusted me. You will now see the surest sign of repentance in my future conduct; and believe me, that never, as far as in me lies, shall another moment's anxiety be caused you by your dutiful and now repentant son."

The remorse which he thus affectingly expresses, was caused by his having incurred debt, to no great amount, but such as he knew would become a burden to a widowed mother. During his residence in one of the Mediterranean isles, he had become acquainted with a family who shewed him great hospitality, and in maintaining social intercourse with them, and sharing their pleasures, he had involved himself beyond his means. It was the first and the last time that his unselfish nature thus transgressed.

In the depth of his penitence for his errors towards an earthly parent,—called forth by the patient bearing of her forgiving love,—do we not see the foreshadowing of that prostration of soul with which he humbled himself, when once the kindness and long-suffering of his God and Saviour were manifested to him in the fulness of redeeming love? And thus it was first through the raising of his moral nature, by means of the holiest affections of man's heart, that he was eventually, after many a fall and rising again, to be drawn up into the higher life of fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

The depth and tenderness of his feelings at this time are well spoken again in the following letter to his mother:—

"What a difference there is between the crowded Sea of the Mediterranean and the broad and dreary

expanse of the Atlantic! On the former sea we passed hundreds of vessels, but from the day we left Gibraltar to enter into the Western Ocean, to the time we sailed up the Carribean Sea, not more than two vessels hove in sight, and they were nearly hull down with their top-spars alone visible. On, on we went through the monster ocean of the western hemisphere, with the glorious sky above, and the rolling restless waves beneath. A huge whale kept us company for one day,—no one on board had ever seen one like it. Porpoises and dolphins enliven us also by their presence every day, affording great delight, by their clumsy gambols, to the seamen and soldiers.

"Our watches were kept day and night. I had my vigil to keep for four hours every night, and often have I, when on the middle or morning watch, clambered aloft to the tops, and sat down and watched, on many a wild and stormy night, the flying scud, as it rolled restlessly across the face of the moon, entirely wrapped up in thoughts of you and home, of past times and past events. Then, I have imagined myself coming home, the surprise it would give you, and how happy we should be. In the midst of such delicious reveries, the retrospect of the last few months has struck me as it were with a blight. I have said to myself, 'Oh, that I had the last two years allotted to me to live over again!' Alas,

regrets are now unavailing; let my future aim be to atone for the lapse of time which can never be recalled.

"We anchored on the morning of the 5th in Montego Bay; and landed the same evening. By the time we had formed on the beach it was quite dark; that most pleasing part of the day, twilight, being very short in these latitudes. As soon as the guides were ready, our company marched off to Falmouth, twenty miles distant, whilst I gave the word of command to No. 5 company, 'Right, form, four deep, march, quick march,' and we began our night march to Maroon Town. We were accompanied by crowds of blacks, many of whom carried torches of resinous wood; and the light glaring on the men's bayonets and appointments, through the pitch dark night, produced a very good effect. I wish the moon had given us her friendly light, for then I should have been able to give you some account of the country; as it was, I could only distinguish that we were marching on a road, with a deep ravine on each side, through a richly-wooded country. The chirping made by insects was both loud and incessant, and the fireflies flitting in the bushes, and across our path by myriads, now and then shewed us by their light a yawning abyss, as we marched, skirting its edge. The air was hot and sultry; yet, in spite of this, and the badness of the roads, the first six miles

were speedily got over; but, as we advanced higher up, the country became more wild, and the roads extremely dangerous, so that, commanding the company for the time being, I had to keep the men well in hand, files locked up. Even in spite of this precaution, one very fine young fellow was nearly killed by a fall over a precipice, but was providentially saved by some bushes. It was half-an-hour before we got him out. We had to make repeated halts, as the men began to shew symptoms of fatigue; and when we arrived at the half-way house (eleven miles over), we halted to serve out to each man some bread and a ration of spirits. After this slight refreshment, the men fell in, the advance sounded, and onward we trudged.

"It now became all up-hill work, and very wearisome: yet I kept my station at the head of the column. About a mile from the half-way house I went ahead of the column, and soon met the advanced guard of the 38th. They cheered, and told us, as we passed, that their comrades were close at hand. In another ten minutes we encountered them. They cheered us loudly, and shook hands with a number of our men, wishing us all good luck, and good health at Maroon Town.

"This place is merely a cantonment, consisting of the Barracks, distant from our quarters about 200 yards, and numerous pretty thatched cottages, with

neat little gardens attached. It is situated in a dell, about 2500 feet above the level of the sea, surrounded on every side by hills, which are thickly covered by stately trees. The foliage is very luxuriant, and the air is richly loaded with the aroma of numerous plants. Altogether the scene is delightful to one who can enjoy the country, and as if nothing should be wanted to heighten the beauty of the scene, through the opening between two hills is visible the boundless expanse of the ocean.

"Often do I wander into the forest to enjoy the cool refreshing shade of the trees, and undisturbed to think of home,—a sweeter contemplation to me now than all the beauties of nature.

"I have two very nice rooms, and a pretty garden attached, with arbours of trellis-work. I have built a nice place, myself, for poultry, and bought eight hens and two cocks, by which I intend soon to make money! They have already laid thirty-two eggs, which sell here at the rate of three-halfpence each. One of my hens is hatching twelve eggs, and long before this letter reaches you, I hope to have a flourishing brood. There is a fine large tank close by our quarters, where I bathe twice every day, and enjoy the luxurious size of my bath."

Five months later, he thus writes:—

"My Darling Mother,—I *do* love you, and that

fondly, although I have often (and may God Almighty forgive me!) rebelled against your wishes.

"Mother, I ask your forgiveness for what has passed. You know not what real anguish some of your letters have caused me; and although I have tried to drown the voice of conscience, after reading them, a still small voice has always been whispering in my ear, and kept me from committing many a sin." . . .

In writing, at the same time, to his sister, he alludes to forebodings of an early death occasionally coming across him, and wishes he were "prepared:"—

"I am no coward, but the thought of death is solemn, and the idea of dying far away from home, with no fond mother or sister to give me comfort in my last moments, is sad enough. Yet I hope the effect of these reflections is wholesome, and will make me consider seriously whether I am fit to die."

He thus writes from Newcastle, on the 5th of June 1849:—

"My Dearest Mother,—I have just received your truly fond and affectionate letter. I assure you it made me shed tears. I feel that my conduct has been undutiful in not having written to you oftener.

But do not imagine for a moment that my neglect in so doing ever arose from forgetfulness. Far worse were I than a brute, could I ever cease to remember the fondest and most devoted of mothers. My dislike to writing in general shall not prevent me from writing to you or Mary by every mail for the future, without fail; so I trust you will not have cause again to upbraid me for having allowed such long intervals of time to elapse between each of my letters to you. That part of your letter, in which you mention your fainting on the terrace, made my blood curdle in my veins, and alarmed me dreadfully. That night I knelt by my bedside, and prayed most fervently that the Lord Almighty would spare your life, for the sake of your orphan children.

"A son's affection for his mother can only really be known, when he feels that her life is in danger. I know not what I should do, or what would become of me, were you, my precious darling mother, to be taken from me. I should go on through life with a void, that I know could never be filled up. My chief pleasure during the past year has been in looking forward to our meeting once again in dear old England; and oh, what delight this anticipation afforded me! But, mother, you must and will get well again. I shall yet, at some not far distant day, have the joy of seeing you, and kissing your fondly-remembered face. You shall be caused no more pain or anxiety

by me. Oh, that my past actions could be obliterated from my recollection, and that my conscience could acquit me of having done anything to cause you grief and uneasiness! . . . In my last letter, I mentioned a wish to get a transfer to a regiment in India; but, of course, now that the war is over, it would be foolish to do so. Besides, I have heard lately that there is every probability of great promotion in the 97th; so I think I will stand by the Sky-blue. My mind is now relieved from its chief pressure by the kindness of dearest Clara and her generous husband.

"I must now tell you of the death of a brother officer, Lieutenant Bindon. He died on the 13th of May at about five o'clock in the morning. Poor fellow! his was a short but painful illness. I remember, when I went into his room the sun was shining brightly through the windows, the birds were singing cheerily, and the merry laugh of the light-hearted soldiers (plainly audible from their barracks) grated harshly on my ear. He was dead! Looking at his meek and placid face, calm and unruffled, I could hardly believe that I was not gazing on the living man. But, alas! his soul had fled. He was a robust and stalwart-looking man, about twenty-four years of age. With God's help, I trust I have learnt a lesson and a warning from his sudden death. He was buried the same evening in the small graveyard at the foot of the hill as you enter the cantonment. I, as senior

subaltern, had command of the firing party. When we arrived, the twilight was fast verging into darkness, and the funeral service was read by the light of a candle. This is soon over, and then all retire from the grave except myself and armed party of forty men. We then give three volleys—the rolling echoes are still reverberating when the earth is thrown in—and all is over. Such has been the melancholy end of my poor friend and mess-mate. I was deeply affected, and could not restrain my tears all the time. I felt my voice choked when I gave the command, 'Fire three volleys in the air.'

"I am now in the quarters he once occupied. It is a pretty cottage, with two rooms, and a verandah in front. When I first went into it, the passion-flower, jessamin, and honeysuckle completely covered the windows; but it made the room so dark, and, combined with the associations of poor Bindon's death, rendered the cottage so gloomy, that I pulled it all down. I have a pretty little flower-garden, and a summer-house formed of a large overhanging bamboo. Would that I could transport myself and cottage to Essex! The weather has been lovely for the last month. I enjoy the cool fresh air in the morning very much. I am never in bed after half-past five in the morning, which is the best time to inhale the bracing mountain-breeze. . . . . I have got command of a very nice company. The men are

mostly well-behaved. My endeavour has always been to be kind as well as strict; the consequence is, (although I am my own trumpeter) the men, I believe, would do anything for me. . . . Now, dearest mother, good-bye. Take care of your health, at least (if not for your own sake) for the sake of your ever fond and affectionate son, "HEDLEY."

About this time, in a letter to one of his sisters, he says—

"You did not mean to give me pain, dearest Mary, but in the same letter in which you tell me of my mother's illness, why did you remind me of those strange huffs in which I used to indulge, which may well make a son ashamed as he remembers them?"

This allusion refers to such domestic traditions of his childish perversity, as have already been recorded. It touchingly reminds those who knew him best of the sensitive tenderness of his heart and conscience.

"Give my tender love," he adds, "to my darling mother, and tell her I received a lock of her hair and another of yours, and am going to get a small locket for each of them, and shall wear them round my neck as a talisman. Darling Mary, I think more of those two locks of hair than of anything else in my possession."

In July 1849, we find him entrusted with the management of a sort of regimental carnival—an entertainment which lasted two days, having been given by the 97th to the neighbouring families who had shewn them hospitality and attention. At the close, he expresses a sense of dissatisfaction, without any definite reason for it, but "is glad it is over."

About this time he writes, with his usual frank simplicity, "I have given up my cottage for the last fortnight to some invalids from Kingston and their doctor, and have domiciled myself in my kitchen. They are very grateful to me for my kindness." His cottage and garden were his playthings, and his refined taste displayed itself in their decoration, although this was now exercised with strict economy, for he writes that he is "saving every fraction he can, to pay off his few remaining debts;" and winds up this information with the pleasant announcement, "In a short time, dear mother, your son will be entirely out of debt; hurrah!"

It was a year after this time that a more serious tone began to be discernible in his letters—a longing for something higher than he had hitherto reached—a conviction of sin before God, "sin worthy of eternal punishment," with a desire to "enter on a state of preparedness for death and eternity." But his condition is that of one wandering in a labyrinth, and the clue to the way home is not yet found. He feels the

force of temptation, laments his dread of his companions' ridicule, and confesses his own utter inability to turn to God, whilst entreating his mother's prayers that the Holy Spirit may be poured out upon him.

The simple pleasures of his cottage-home have a stronger hold than ever upon his heart, and re-awaken the old yearnings after those who made home to him in England:—

"My garden is in first-rate order, and I shall be sorry to leave it when we are ordered away. The passion-flower, twined with honeysuckle and convolvulus, are blooming so prettily over my porch. Oh! my darling mother, that you were here, living in one of my rooms! What pleasure it would give me to look once more on your dear face, to mingle my prayers with yours for the temporal well-being and eternal happiness of mother and son. I generally retire to my summer-house to read when I feel serious; there I have no interruption from any one, and can sit for hours, with nothing to engage my senses but the wide expanse of the distant ocean, the sweet scent of heliotrope and geranium, the voice of the tiny humming-bird, or the rustling breeze in the lofty and quivering bamboos. Even the purring of my little kittens is pleasant to me at such a time. What fitter season for prayer than when one is surrounded by the gifts of the All-powerful Creator! But, oh! dear mother, I wish I *felt* more what I write.

"A poor gunner of the Royal Artillery died last night. His remains are to be buried to-day. While I write, I hear the Dead March, and now the funeral party are winding their way to the graveyard, the muffled drum and shrill fife calling forth the soldiers from their barracks to see their lately gay and laughing comrade borne to his last resting-place. Who amongst them can tell which shall be next? Little they care, poor fellows. The sound of their merry laughter will soon be heard again, as unsubdued as ever. I hope, my dear mother, that these warnings will have a salutary effect upon me. Those have lately been carried off whom I knew, and who (like myself) thought little of death, until he knocked at their own door, and beckoned them to come away—*where?*"

We have now come to the close of his life of general recklessness, chequered, and of late frequently, with strong religious impressions—convictions of sin, which resulted in vigorous though short-lived efforts at reform. Of this portion of his life, a valued friend of his, then belonging to the 97th, has lately written the following short notice:—

"From the first day I saw Vicars at Zante, in 1846, I was struck with his manly air and the peculiar, open truthfulness of his eye. He was at this

time much taken up with the gaieties of the island. We quitted for Malta, whence, in 1848, we sailed for Jamaica. During the voyage, he used to dress as a sailor, and delight in making himself useful to the crew. In Jamaica, he had the advantages of attending an excellent ministry, and of witnessing the beauty of consistent religious character in the family of Dr M'Ilree, the surgeon of the 97th, which had their effect upon him. But this all passed away on his being withdrawn from these influences, by being ordered to the Lowlands to sit on court-martial, where he was again led away by unavoidable association with ungodly companions. At this time, as I afterwards heard from his own lips, he totally neglected prayer and the reading of the Bible, and consequently lost the power of resisting temptation. A long period elapsed before a second conviction arose, and this appeared to be sudden, and lasted till he left Jamaica. He frequently came to me for prayer and the study of the Scriptures, either at my own quarters, or at a brother officer's."

The 97th left Jamaica for Halifax, Nova Scotia, in June 1851. Almost immediately after landing, he was ordered to Canada, to take charge of volunteers for a regiment there. It was in the autumn of this year that he visited the Falls of Niagara, and his journal is written with deep and enthusiastic delight,

describing his increasing excitement from the moment when he first distinguished the distant roar of the waters to that which "filled him with sublime and awful joy when they first broke upon his sight." He expresses his belief that no one could be an atheist whilst beholding the majestic power of God as displayed in the stupendous magnificence of those Falls; and whilst returning day after day to refresh and solemnise his spirit there, he realises with renewed earnestness the sinfulness of wasting life in a mere search after pleasure, and is impressed with the importance of having a fixed aim of sufficient strength to be a lever to his life. Self-interest, he has found, even when calculated upon with the reckoning of eternity, is not strong enough at all times to raise a man above the dominion of his own inclinations. He knew not yet "the expulsive power of a new affection," for he had not learnt to say, "The love of Christ constraineth me."

CHAPTER III.

Conversion.

"HENCEFORTH I live."

St Paul.

" To be *awakened*," writes one* who, both from individual and ministerial experience, well knew the difference between *convictions* and *conversion*, " you need to know your own heart. To be *saved*, you need to know the heart of God and of Christ."

Hitherto Hedley Vicars had been the subject only of the awakening work of the Spirit. In later days, when he looked back on that period of his life, he distinctly stated, " I was not then converted to God." He was seeking, but he had not found, " the grace of life." Thank God! there is no such asking eye directed upward, to which He does not, sooner or later, " reveal His Son." After all his anxious alarms, which had resulted in efforts succeeded by failures, he was now to be taught that the strength to persevere would be found, when the God of Hope should have " filled him with all joy and peace *in believing;*" and that he was to *continue* " *diligent* to

* Rev. Robert M'Cheyne.

be found of Him *in peace*," as the one way of being "without spot and blameless."

It was in the month of November 1851 that, whilst awaiting the return of a brother officer to his room, he idly turned over the leaves of a Bible which lay on the table. The words caught his eye, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Closing the book, he said, "If this be true for me, henceforth I will live, by the grace of God, as a man should live who has been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ."

That night he scarcely slept, pondering in his heart whether it were presumptuous or not to claim an interest in those words. During those wakeful hours, he was watched, we cannot doubt, with deep and loving interest, by One who *never* slumbereth nor sleepeth; and it was said of him in heaven, "Behold, he prayeth!"

In answer to those prayers, he was enabled to believe, as he arose in the morning, that the message of peace *was* "true for him,"—"a faithful saying, and worthy of *all* acceptation." "The past," he said, "then, is blotted out. What I have to do is, to go forward. I cannot return to the sins from which my Saviour has cleansed me with His own blood."

An impetus was now given in a new direction, of sufficient force to last till the race was run—until he

could say with the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Thenceforth *he lived.* And the life he now lived in the flesh, he lived by the faith of the Son of God, of whom he delighted to say, with realising faith and adoring gratitude, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me."

On the morning which succeeded that memorable night, he bought a large Bible, and placed it open on the table in his sitting-room, determined that "an open Bible," for the future, should be "his colours." "It was to speak for me," he said, "before I was strong enough to speak for myself." His friends came as usual to his rooms, and did not altogether fancy the new colours. One remarked, that he had "turned Methodist," and, with a shrug, retreated. Another ventured on the bolder measure of warning him not to become a hypocrite: "Bad as you were, I never thought you would come to this, old fellow." So, for the most part, for a time, his quarters were deserted by his late companions. During six or seven months he had to encounter no slight opposition at mess, "and had hard work," as he said, "to stand his ground." But the promise did not fail, "The righteous shall hold on his way, and *he that hath clean hands* shall wax stronger and stronger."

All this time he found great comfort in the society of a few brother officers who were walking with God,

but especially in the faithful preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by Dr Twining, Garrison Chaplain at Halifax, and in the personal friendship of that man of God, which he enjoyed uninterruptedly from that time until the day of his death. Under so deep an obligation did he consider himself to Dr Twining, that he frequently referred to him as his spiritual father; and to his scriptural preaching and teaching, and blessed example of "walking with God," may doubtless be traced, under the mighty working of the Holy Spirit, those clear and happy views of religion and that consistency and holiness of life which succeeded his conversion.

We learn, from a letter recently quoted,* that from this time his conversation grew daily more deeply spiritual, and that he lost no opportunity of attending every public service in Dr Twining's church, and his Bible Classes for officers, soldiers, and those in hospital. His rapid growth in knowledge and grace is mainly attributed to the instruction and profit gained at these classes, by a senior officer in the 97th, whose friendship he deeply valued.†

A heart so large and loving by nature as that of Hedley Vicars can scarcely accept the open invitation to come to Jesus for pardon, peace, and eternal life,

* From Charles Cay, Esq., Assistant-Surgeon, Coldstream Guards, late of the 97th.

† Lieutenant-Colonel Ingram.

without giving an immediate response to the injunction, "Let him that heareth say, Come." Accordingly he began to teach in a Sunday-school, to visit the sick, and to take every opportunity of reading the Scriptures and praying with the men singly. Of three of these, whom he describes as "once great sinners, nearly as bad as myself," he could soon say confidently that they had followed him in turning to God. At the same time, he was also the means of awakening some of his brother officers to make the earnest inquiry, "What must I do to be saved?"

"As he felt he had been much forgiven," writes the friend before alluded to, "so in proportion was the ever-burning and increasing love to Him whom he had so long grieved by his sins. The name of Jesus was ever on his lips and in his heart. Much grace was given him to confess Jesus boldly before others; and when he was Adjutant, his example and his rebukes to the men for swearing carried great weight, and shewed his zeal for the honour of God."

The Adjutancy of his regiment was offered to him by his Colonel in the spring of that year (1852) with these flattering words:—"Vicars, you are the man I can best trust with responsibility." This appointment appears to have given universal satisfaction amongst officers and men, although one of the officers

remarked, jestingly, "He won't do for it—he is too conscientious."

This conscientiousness was not only evinced in his military but also in his private life. Every amusement which he found to be injurious in its effect on his spiritual condition was cheerfully relinquished. In a letter to his eldest sister, he inquires her opinion of balls and other public entertainments, and adds:—"I have of late refused every invitation to such amusements, on finding they made me less earnest and thoughtful, and indisposed me for reading and prayer."

We find his growth in grace indicated in the following letter:—

TO MISS VICARS.

"*April* 29, 1852.

"My darling Mary,—I am going on much in the same manner as usual, with nothing to disturb the even tenour of my way. But no; I must correct myself here, for I trust that I have really turned over a new leaf, and that my heart is gradually but surely undergoing a purifying process.

"I have been fighting hard against sin. I mean, not only what the world understands by that term, but against the power of it in my heart: the conflict has been severe,—it is so still; but I trust, by the help of God, that I shall finally obtain the mastery.

What I pray for most constantly is, that I may be enabled to see more clearly the wicked state of my heart by nature, and thus to feel my greater need of an Almighty Saviour. You cannot imagine what doubts and torments assail my mind at times, how torn and harassed I am by sinful thoughts and want of faith.

"You, Mary, can never experience my feelings, for you know not in what a sinful state my life has been passed. Well may I call myself the 'chief of sinners!' I sometimes even add to my sins, by doubting the efficacy of Christ's atonement, and the cleansing power of his precious blood to wash away my sins. Oh, that I could realise to myself more fully that his blood 'cleanseth us from *all* sin!'

"I was always foremost and daring enough in sin. Would that I could shew the same spirit in the cause of religion; would that I felt as little fear of being called and thought to be a Christian, as I used to feel of being enlisted against Christianity!

"'Am I a soldier of the Cross,
A follower of the Lamb;
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?'

"I trust I am beginning to see and feel the folly and vanity of the world and all its pleasures, and that I have at length entered the strait gate, and am travelling the narrow road that leadeth unto eternal life.

"I trust you will not consider me a confirmed egotist, for writing so much of myself. I have done so, because I thought you would like to hear how changed I am become.

"I trust, dearest, that your heart has been changed, long before mine was touched. Let us both remember that we can do no good thing of ourselves, for it is the Lord alone who worketh in us both to will and do of his good pleasure. Let us not trust in our own righteousness, which is but as 'filthy rags,' but let us trust entirely in the merits and blood of our blessed Saviour. I never can sufficiently shew my gratitude to God, who has shewn such long-suffering forbearance towards me,—who has spared me through so many scenes of sin and folly.

"Summer has begun to change the face of nature, and everything is looking green and lovely. I took a delightful walk into the country yesterday evening,—the first time I ever enjoyed the blessed sense of communion with God. But when I came home it had all fled, and left me in a disturbed and restless state of mind; my summer heart of warmth and love had changed back into its natural state of winter, cold and dead!

"I am sorry to say that poor Lieutenant J——— is in a very precarious state; even if he recovers, he will never have the use of his leg. I go sometimes to sit with him, and endeavour to bring to his mind the

things which belong to his everlasting peace. He said to me one day, 'Vicars, tell me, do you *really* feel happier *now* than you did?' Poor fellow! he is in a very desponding state of mind.

"I generally spend four or five hours each day, when not on duty, in reading the Bible, and meditation and prayer, and take a walk every afternoon for a couple of hours. I am longing to see you all again, but I do not know when I shall be able. Write soon, and tell me how you all are getting on, especially how my darling mother is. Is she looking ill? Does she get out every day? Do not you think that the summer will make her better? Give my fond love to her. I will write to her by the next mail, please God.

"Pray for me, and believe me, I never forget to pray for you all.

"How little we do to shew our love for that Saviour, who agonised on the cross for our sakes. I cannot close my letter better than by beseeching Him to give us his Holy Spirit, to draw our hearts above this world, to look to the Saviour with the eye of faith.

"'When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

"'Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the cross of Christ my God:
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.'

"Adieu, my dearest Mary; and always remember me as

"Your affectionate and attached brother,

"HEDLEY."

To his brother he writes:—

"*May* 13, 1852.

". . . . Let us pray earnestly for the Holy Spirit, and we shall not be sent empty away. Let us ask Him to shew us the sinful state of our hearts. I have found comparatively little trouble in giving up external sins, but the innate sin of my heart, oh, how great it is! It is here the real battle must be fought; and the more humbling is the sense of our vileness, the more we shall feel the need and value of a Saviour. We all have our temptations, and in scarcely any profession could they more beset the Christian beginner, than in the army.

"But let us remember, whatever be our calling, God has promised that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear. Only let us feel that we are unable of ourselves to resist evil, or to do anything good; let us look to Christ, and trust in Him alone, and take up our cross, and follow Him. We *must* give up the pleasures of the world, for they unfit us for spiritual meditation; and although they may be

hard to part with, as a right eye or right hand, there is no alternative, if we wish to grow in grace.

"You will, perhaps, be surprised, as you read this letter, at the change which has come over me. Yes, I believe and feel that I am a changed man; that I have taken the important step of declaring on whose side I will be. Oh, that I could persuade you to enrol yourself with me on the side of Jesus Christ!

"As Newton says, 'I know what the world can do, and what it can not do.' It cannot give or take away that peace of God which passeth all understanding. It cannot soothe the wounded conscience, nor enable us to meet death with comfort. I have tried both services. For twenty-four years have I lived under the thraldom of sin, led by the Devil. None need despair of being welcomed by the Saviour, when He has pardoned and brought to repentance such a sinner as I have been. The retrospect of my past life is now miserable to me; yet before I was taught by the Spirit of God, I thought and called it a life of *pleasure!* The very name, when applied to sin, now makes my heart sicken. Even then I never could enjoy recalling the occupations of each day; and think you my conscience was quiet? No, though again and again I stifled it, as too many do. Bitter experience has taught me that 'there is no peace to the wicked.' Blessed be God, I know now that I

am pardoned and reconciled to God, through the death of his Son. How happy is the Christian's life, when he has this assurance!

"Do not think, dear Edward, that, because I write thus, I wish you to think me very religious, or that I consider myself better than you. I do not. But I find more pleasure now in writing on these subjects than on any other, and I want to draw out your thoughts about them. If you have not yet turned entirely to God, take my advice, and if you want to find true happiness, do so at once."

A letter, dated June 23, 1852, indicates his steady progress in the new course:—

"My darling Mother,—If you look out you will probably see my name in the Gazette in a fortnight or so, as the Colonel sends the recommendation home by this mail. My worldly prospects will soon be considerably improved. What reason I have to be thankful to Him who, notwithstanding my utter unworthiness, has been so kind and merciful to me! Oh! that I felt more love and gratitude to Him! I trust, my dear mother, that in the performance of the arduous duties of an adjutant I may never neglect the more important duties of a Christian, and that I may do *all* to the glory of God. How amply shall I be repaid if even one of my fellow-soldiers is

brought by my example and advice, as a means in the hand of God, to a saving knowledge of his mercies in Christ. I must be prepared to meet with much discouragement from ignorance and hardness of heart; but I will endeavour to do my duty, and leave the issue to God, remembering the words, 'Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God alone who giveth the increase.'

"Poor J——'s leg was amputated above the knee on Saturday. The operation was performed under the influence of chloroform. He bore with Christian resignation the will of his Heavenly Father. I was in Dr Twining's house during the time, but not present at the amputation, as I could be of no use. He is now getting on well, poor fellow. I am delighted to say I firmly believe that his suffering illness has, through the blessing of God, been made the means of the conversion of his immortal soul.

"Four or five of my brother officers attend Dr Twining's Bible-class. One of them has, I trust, been truly converted. He was, like myself, about the last in the regiment one would ever have thought likely to become religious; but God's ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. I trust his example may do much good. It is grievous to see how little regard men pay to the salvation of their never-dying souls. But I must ever remember that I was once like them, and worse; and that it is only

through the grace of God that I am now different. It may truly be said of me, 'Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?' I now see the direful effect of a long continuance in evil, for sin has had for such a length of time so entire a dominion over me, that I find it hard to fight against it, and often think I must be worse than any one else. If the Holy Spirit did not help me, I never *could* have made even the little progress in religion that I *have* made. If left to myself I must fall. Oh! that I may increase and grow in grace each day!"

The same earnest tone pervades all his letters during the remainder of his residence in Nova Scotia. We find allusions to conflicts and difficulties in overcoming temptations and establishing a new course of life. "But I know it must be done, and in God's strength it shall be," is ever the conclusion.

Newton's "Cardiphonia" was a book which at this time afforded him much help and consolation:—

"Do send for it, if you have never yet read it. I get great comfort from his letters, for they shew that every believer is exposed to the same temptations and trials, in a greater or less degree, and that his life is one of continual warfare. Does not even St Paul tell us that he had a constant conflict of conscience against inclination, of the desire to do right against

the promptings of evil? I feel with Newton how poor, and weak, and simple I am, but that Jesus is wise, and strong, and abounding in grace. He has given me a desire to trust my all in his hands, and He will not disappoint the expectation which He has himself raised.

> "'How oft have sin and Satan strove
> To rend my soul from thee, my God;
> But everlasting is thy love,
> And Jesus seals it with his blood.'"

A letter, written by Dr Twining to Captain Vicars' eldest sister, upon receiving the intelligence of his death, may find its place most appropriately here, as it gives a sketch of this period of his life :—

"*Halifax, May* 21, 1855.

"My dear Lady Rayleigh,—I felt impelled to write to you as soon as I had learned that the Lord had been pleased, in the inscrutable dispensation of his providence, to call my dear and highly-valued friend from his service on earth to the fulness of joy at his right hand for ever.

"I thank you very much for your letter, written at a time when your heart must be wrung with sorrow. I have long perceived in my beloved young friend a rapid ripening for glory. This was evident in his entire devotion of soul to the Saviour, whom he loved,

and that intimate knowledge of the length, and breadth, and depth of the love of Christ which he possessed, it seemed to me, in an increased and increasing degree every time I heard from him. Our short-sighted eyes might see many reasons why he should be continued in a sphere of usefulness which he so eminently filled and adorned; but we see through a glass darkly: He who has been pleased to say unto *him*, 'Come up higher,' has condescended to say to *us* that all shall be explained when we see face to face, and know as we are known. 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.'

"You ask me for some details relative to my dear friend. It affords me a melancholy pleasure to give them, as well because it is the wish of those to whom he was most dear, as because it recalls the occasions when we took sweet counsel together and walked as friends.

"When I first knew Captain Vicars he was 'walking according to the course of this world.' He had, as he told me, been under strong convictions in the West Indies, and attended religious meetings; but trusting in his own resolutions, and not in the Saviour's strength, he had fallen again under the power of temptation. There was something very attractive in his appearance, and I asked him to meet with a few officers and others at my house to join in reading the

Scriptures, conversation, and prayer. He came at once, and never failed to attend regularly. It was soon evident that he took a deep interest in the matter. He became a teacher in my Sunday-school and attended a Bible-class which I had established on Sunday-evening for soldiers, and another during the week for soldiers' wives; this he did to encourage the men and women of his regiment to come. He and Mr Nash always spent Sunday evening at my house, as they never dined at the regimental mess on that day. He told me of all his trials, and we often knelt together in my little study, laying them all open before a throne of grace. It was evident, as time passed on, that he was growing in knowledge, in grace, in consistency, in firmness, in Christian experience.

"I knew him much more intimately afterwards. An officer in the 97th Regiment, Mr J——, was shot through the knee in moose-hunting, and being very uncomfortable at his quarters, I brought him to my house, and took care of him until (after the amputation of his leg) he finally recovered. Vicars evinced the tenderest regard for the body and soul of his brother officer; he nursed him with the greatest assiduity, and for six weeks was a constant inmate of my house. Then I began most intimately to know him—his high and honourable principles, his tender heart, his sweet disposition, and all sanctified

by Divine grace! His was a lovely character; it was impossible to know him and not love him; every creature about my house did love him. He had to suffer a fiery persecution from some of the officers of his regiment. The Lord saw that it was best, and made it a means of strengthening and confirming him in the faith. You know, my dear Madam, that a certain degree of religion is considered by the world to be decorous and proper, but there is nothing so much dreaded as being 'righteous overmuch.' It is quite impossible for a Christian to comply with the maxims and customs of a world which 'lieth in wickedness;' but my beloved friend was strengthened to bear a consistent testimony to the truth, to take up his cross and follow Jesus.

"He took part in all efforts amongst us in the Redeemer's cause to win souls to him. For example, the Naval and Military Bible Society, City Missions on the plan of those at home, and a Society for giving the Scriptures in their own language to the Mic-mac Indians—the aborigines of this country. Of these Societies he was a member, and his memory is now warmly cherished by those with whom he was a fellow-labourer in these causes. But he rests from his labours, his emancipated spirit is with its God. Oh, that we may have grace to follow in his steps! I enclose one or two of his letters to me; may I ask their return? They are now doubly precious in my

sight. My prayers are offered up at the throne of grace for the bereaved mother and afflicted relatives of my friend.

"I am, my dear Madam,

"Your faithful servant in Christ,

"J. T. TWINING."

CHAPTER IV.

Diary.

"TAKE my heart, Lord, for I cannot give it to Thee.
Keep it, for I cannot keep it for Thee."

St Augustine.

From his diary, kept daily with conscientious regularity and faithfulness, we give the following brief extracts:—

"*July* 3, 1852.—Rode out to visit Brunt, a poor ordnance labourer. Read and prayed with him for nearly an hour. He appears to be very ill, but all his hopes are fixed on Christ.

"*Sunday*, 4*th*.—Read a chapter of Bogatsky this morning. Unrefreshed after morning prayer. Instructed my class at the Sunday-school. Thoughts wandering during Divine service. Read and prayed with Corporal Cranny, 42d Regiment, for nearly an hour. A bright specimen of a dying Christian. There were eighteen of us at Dr Twining's class in the evening.

"5*th*.—Rose at half-past five. Read a chapter in Bogatsky. I feel I am but little advanced as yet. Evil thoughts during the day. Read with Corporal

Cranny for about an hour. Would that I were more like him! From not having prayed for God's blessing on what I was going to read, I felt little comfort from it. Did not offer to pray with him, as I was afraid I should break down. Read and prayed with Brunt for an hour.

"6*th*.—Engaged at orderly-room work, and rubbing-up drill. My mind more at peace than it is generally. I was with Jones for a short time in the evening. I told him I had been to see Cranny and Brunt. I am afraid I did so with the idea that I should be thought well of. I must strive much against self-righteousness. Let me always endeavour to feel that, having done all, I am but an unprofitable servant.

"8*th*.—Prayed rather hurriedly, owing to putting it off too late. Wrote to Mary. Intended to have gone to see Cranny and Brunt, but had not time. At Dr Twining's class in the evening; there were sixteen sergeants, two privates, and two women present. Prayed at night about twelve o'clock.

"9*th*.—Awoke sleepy and dull, but after prayer felt much happier. Lost my temper once or twice with the men. I feel I am unable of myself to do anything aright. Read Luke xv. with Cranny, and prayed. Afterwards read and prayed with Brunt. In the evening I became unhappy, from thoughts of all my former sins.

"17*th*.—In a very happy state of mind after prayer; still the merest trifles distract my mind. I attended the Temperance Meeting in the evening, when I was delighted to see about sixty soldiers of the 97th. I wish the whole regiment would join.

"*Sunday*, 18*th*.—Went to the Sunday-school. In the evening, we had sixteen officers and men at the class in the hospital. Went to church afterwards. Text—'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.' Oh! do thou grant me this, for Jesus Christ's sake!

"20*th*.—Arose this morning with no near views of Jesus. Out of temper again to-day. Oh! I must strive against this. Read with Cranny for half-an-hour; then went to Dr Twining's class. Two there beside myself. I have forgotten God to-day. Thoughts wandering in prayer. I must look entirely to Christ, and live out of myself.

"26*th*.—Spoke to Hylyard and two others this morning about religion. I believe Hylyard to be truly converted. He was with poor Brunt last night. He could not speak. He is probably dead now, poor fellow! If so, I trust that his soul is now with the 'spirits of just men made perfect.' Prayed with some fervour. My past sins strike me now so differently from what they did. Jesus is my only hope. Read and prayed in the evening for an hour and a-half with Brunt. I think he is dying.

"28*th*.—Was preserved, *in answer to my prayer*, from an evil temper at drill. Oh! my God, grant that it may always be so! Read and prayed with poor Brunt. Four of the 97th soldiers came in, and sat down. I have great hopes of all. I was enabled to speak to them pretty freely.

"*August* 9*th*.—In a happy frame of mind nearly all day. Went to the levee at two o'clock. Dined with Jones; talked with him on religious subjects; felt a good deal of pride in talking. Oh! my God, enable me to overcome this, and to feel myself indeed to be but a worthless sinner.

"10*th*.—Had happy thoughts of Jesus. Not many wandering thoughts at morning prayer. Shewed how far I am from hating sin, by telling with pleasure of some of my mad acts at Malta to two of my brother officers.

"16*th*.—Still in a torpid state of mind. O God, grant that I am not going back in religion! How seldom have I this day thought of all Christ has done for me! Did not read a chapter this afternoon; prayer wandering. Read a psalm with Brunt, but not at all happy in doing so. Read the papers till too late at night, and in evening prayer found my thoughts wandering. Oh! my God, give me thy Holy Spirit, or I must fall back to my old state! Oh! that I could rest more entirely on thee for strength!

"21*st*.— . . . . Read and prayed with Brunt.

Was enabled to speak to him, but felt how little right I had to speak.

"23*d*.—My mind more tranquil during the day. O God, I thank thee that thou hast answered my prayers, and enabled me to fix my heart on my Saviour! May I live for the future to thy glory! I want to love Christ above all. Read and prayed with Brunt for some time.

"24*th*.—My mind more composed to-day than usual. I must have a regular system of reading the Scriptures every day. Psalm in the morning, Gospel in the afternoon, and Epistle in the evening. Did wrong in the evening in laughing at poor ——. I must give up teasing him, for it is unchristian-like. O God! give me thy Holy Spirit to enable me to overcome this habit.

"26*th*.—I begin to see more clearly every day the depravity of my heart, and my own utter inability to turn to God of myself. At the class, in the evening, about fifteen. I went to Dr Twining's afterwards. Spoke ill-naturedly of one or two. I would that I could do two things—never speak about myself, and never speak evil of any one.

"27*th*.—Have had happy thoughts of Christ to-day. Oh! what cause have I to love him! O God, I would devote myself to thee for ever. I want chiefly grace to live out of myself—to look to Christ alone. The missionary M'Gordon came to me in the

evening. He is a very good man. He talked to me of Christ.

"30*th.*—Had thoughts of unbelief this morning. Spoke to Langford and Wilcox; hope what I said to them may prove, through God's blessing, of some good. I feel that pride is one of my most besetting sins. Oh, that I had a humble spirit! O God, undeserving as I am, grant me more of thy Holy Spirit.

"*September* 2*d.*—I have just come from seeing poor Brunt's corpse. I went there to read with him, and found him in his coffin. Oh, how my heart smote me! It is ten days since I last read with him. Forgive me, my God, this, and give me thy Holy Spirit to sanctify me more and more for thy service.

"*September* 8*th.*—Remained in bed till half-past seven. Much troubled with doubts of my being justified, and the fear that I am striving to *gain* heaven. O God, give me thy Holy Spirit, that I may look solely to my Saviour! Better after prayer. Afraid to talk to my orderly on religion.

"*September* 11*th.*—Remained in bed till nearly eight o'clock. Oh, how hard it is to do what I know to be right! Prayed to-day for help from above to enable me to strive more against a growing desire to save myself. O God, enable me to look to the finished work of Jesus!

"*Saturday*, 20*th.*—Passed the day in a very list-

less manner—did not, through a sort of fear, go and read with Cranny. Joking too much for my own happiness and comfort. Read a little of Haweis on the Sacrament. Oh, do thou, Holy Spirit, shine into my heart, and sanctify and prepare me for partaking aright of the blessed sacrament of the body and blood of Christ on Sunday!

"*Sunday*, 26*th.*—In a very happy frame of mind nearly all day. Went to a prayer-meeting at half-past six o'clock A.M. Partook of the sacrament; rather a happy season. I trust I shall keep the vows I made.

"*October* 19*th.*—Got up at half-past six. Grievously distressed with thoughts of my great sins. O God, thou art of purer eyes than to behold my iniquity, yet for thy dear Son's sake forgive me all my sins. I well know their exceeding sinfulness, but the blood of Christ cleanseth *me* from *all* sin.

"*October* 29*th.*—Remained in bed till eight o'clock. *Must* give up this slothfulness. Had not time to read my chapter till twelve o'clock, all owing to love of sleep. At mess scarcely any thoughts of Jesus; slight symptoms of a desire to return to the world and sin.

"*November* 5*th.*—Rose at seven o'clock. Would that I could fix my waking thoughts on Jesus! How few are the moments I think of Him to those in which I forget Him! Walked with Desmond and Nash.

Kirby wrote me a letter thanking me for bringing him back to trust in Jesus. He talks of his sins. Little does he know the sinner he talks to.

"15*th*.—Arose at seven. A few thoughts of Jesus whilst dressing. I would that I had a heart more entirely set on things above! What a body of sin I carry about! Received the reports of the Mic-mac Missionary Society—rather proud at seeing my name in the list of subscribers. When shall I conquer this detestable pride? When shall I look upon myself as the vilest of sinners, as indeed I am?

"16*th*.—At the class offered up a few ejaculatory prayers to Him who seeth in secret. Walked out with Dr Twining—spoke very profitably together about our precious Saviour. I told him what just came into my mind, namely, that I lost at Corfu the Bible my mother gave me about seven years ago, and after being about five years without any, I purchased a small one at Jamaica, I think, but of so indistinct a print that I could scarcely read it. I certainly rarely did. O God, may I redeem the time that may yet be left me! I shall keep my diary in another book to-morrow, and make out a few rules to go by."

The following passage might truly be called the creed of his heart:—

"I have got over some rough ground since I was

first led to seek after happiness, where alone it can be found, in the religion of Jesus. I have had to battle much against the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; but though often on the point of giving up the struggle in despair, the goodness, the long-suffering, the wondrous loving-kindness of my God have guarded and watched over me, and kept me from falling utterly away from Him. Oh, what cause have I to give Him most humble and hearty thanks for all his goodness towards me! When I look back on my past life, nearly six and twenty years, I see nothing but an accumulation of transgression and sin. Oh, my soul, let me remember with disgust and horror that for nearly five and twenty years I was a willing servant of Satan. What aggravates my wickedness is, that it has been all committed in spite of the advice and warnings of a truly Christian mother, and how often I have silenced the voice of conscience. But why dwell any more on a life which has been wasted? Why bring up the remembrance of sins, each one of which would have murdered my soul had I died in the act of commission? I do it that they may humble and prostrate me in the dust before that holy God who has said, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' I acknowledge, O my God, that hell is only my desert—that were I ever consigned to its abode it would be but a just recompense for my transgressions. Let me ever keep in mind that if I am

saved it must be entirely and solely through Divine mercy in Christ Jesus. Were I to be judged according to my works, I should be justly condemned. But thanks be to God for the gift of his precious Word, which reveals his wondrous love in sending his only begotten Son into the world to die for sinners. There I read that Jesus Christ was crucified for me, that He bore in his own body all my sins—that his blood cleanseth from all sin—that He has paid the penalty due to sin—that He has satisfied God's intense hatred towards sin. Had my salvation depended upon keeping the law, I should be without hope, for I have broken it thousands of times. But through this man, the Lord Jesus, is preached the forgiveness of sins, and they that believe are justified from *all things*. Oh, then, let me close with God's free offer of salvation to all, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' Let me look to Christ as my righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Let me lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset me, and let me run with patience the race set before me, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith, working out my own salvation with fear and trembling, remembering that it is God that worketh in me to will and to do of his good pleasure. I would from this day give up the remainder of my life to the service of God. I will keep on this diary that I may be able to trace

the progress I make in the Christian life, and I will faithfully put down everything. I will draw up some rules to enable me the better to devote some portion of each day to God's service. By these I will be guided while I remain in Halifax."

WINTER.

"Rise every morning at seven o'clock. Meditate on a text, whilst dressing. From eight to nine, read a chapter in the Old Testament, and prayer. From nine to ten, breakfast, and read newspaper, or any light book, carefully avoiding novels. From ten to one, orderly room work. From one to half-past two, a chapter in the Gospels, and prayer. From half-past two to four, orderly room work. From four to six, exercise, visiting sick people, &c. Offer up a short prayer, before going to mess, that God would keep me from temptation. After dinner, offer up a prayer to God first; then read books of general interest; and give an hour to my Bible and prayer, before going to bed; and oh, I beseech Thee, my heavenly Father, to enable me thus to devote the remainder of my days to Thee! May my motto be, 'Not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.'

"*November* 19*th*.—Rose at seven o'clock. Meditated, whilst dressing, on 'Ye must be born again.' Oh, how happy I am when I can fix my thoughts on

Jesus! Much engaged during the day in orderly room work. In the afternoon spoke, for a short time, to Hylyard. Whilst on my way to the mess, thought on that text, 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' During dinner, rather too much given to levity. Gave a dollar to a district charity. I do not know that I gave it in a right spirit. I know I look too much to what the world may say of me if I do not give. Oh, that I may do all things with a single eye to the glory of God! Evening prayer distracted. Oh, that I could shut out the world; that I could banish my own evil heart when at prayer! How sweet would then be my communion with God! Read 2 Thess. ii.

"*November* 20*th.*—Stayed in bed this morning till twenty minutes past seven. I have broken one of my rules again. I must endeavour to conquer this slothfulness. Read again John viii. What comfort in reading the Saviour's love and compassion, 'Go, and sin no more!' Jesus, I would hear Thy voice saying to me, 'Go, and sin no more.' My sins have been exceeding great, but they do not exceed Thy love and willingness to pardon. Yet how prone I am to think otherwise. Lord, increase my faith! Read some of Bickersteth's 'Life.' Oh, that I had more of his devotion and love to the Saviour! I sometimes really doubt whether I *believe* that Jesus bled and

suffered for me; for although I have a kind of belief that He did, yet how small my gratitude and love; how cold and hard my heart! I have not shed a tear for months; in fact, I do not think I ever cried over my sins more than three or four times.

"*November* 22*d.*—Endeavoured to meditate, whilst dressing, on 'My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.' Alas, *my* soul, how different it is with thee! Mr ——— called to ask me if I would become a district visitor, to which I agreed. Met Dr Twining, on my return from walking, and told him that Mr ——— had asked me to become a visitor. He disapproved of it, and said that my duty was to devote my spare time to the soldiers of my regiment. I feel that I have not been sufficiently earnest in this of late. Oh, let me start once again in the path of my own Christian duty, labouring alone from love to Christ, and praying always for his blessing on whatever I may undertake. Let me devote all my energies to the work of endeavouring to bring my fellow-sinners and fellow-soldiers unto Jesus; and do Thou, my heavenly Father, bless my feeble efforts, and make me the means in Thy hands of bringing many from darkness to light. May I ever feel it a glorious privilege to be permitted to raise my voice in the cause of that Saviour whom I have so often rejected and denied; and when discouraged by seeing

no good results, let me put faith in Thee, and in Thy Word, 'Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it again after many days.' May I never omit earnest prayer for all those in whom I may perceive any sign of grace, and never despair of the hardest-hearted sinner, remembering what I once was.

"*January 8th*, 1853.—Rose at seven. Meditated on the words, 'I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak peace to his people and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly.' May I ever, ever be guided by the promptings of the Holy Spirit! Let me wait patiently for his outpouring; then shall I have peace and joy; my soul shall magnify the Lord, and my spirit shall rejoice in God my Saviour. But, oh, let me beware of self-confidence and security. 'Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.'

"*Sunday, 9th.*—Rose at ten minutes after seven. Text, 'If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.' What comfort, what consolation! O Jesus, may I ever rest all my hopes on Thee! May I study to please Thee, and may Thy Word be my delight! Very happy all day. Was enabled to speak freely with the children at the class. They were more attentive than usual. O Jesus, I would thank Thee for having answered my petition! I do

not recollect ever being more free from wandering thoughts than on this day. Dr Twining wrote me a note to say that as he was not well, he could not come to the class, but requested me to attend for him. Read 1 Peter ii., and prayed that God would assist me to expound it to the men. I felt very nervous about praying before so many,—there being about twenty-four present, and several of my brother officers. God did assist me, and I was enabled to pray, I trust, from my heart.

"18*th*.—Spoke to Jackson, of the Grenadiers. I was just kneeling down to pray, when I remembered that this was the class day at Dr Twining's; hurried down there, and afterwards N—— and I talked together rather unprofitably, and so the day passed by without a prayer since eight o'clock. This has been the first day, since I made my rules, that I have forgotten to pray at noon as well as at morning and night. O Jesus, forgive me; and grant that as this is the first, so it may be the last time that I neglect to pray to Thee, the hearer and answerer of prayer.

"23*d*.— . . . Lord Jesus, I would give myself up to be led by Thee in all things. Give me greater energy and zeal in the performance of my temporal duties. Enable me to please my Colonel, and yet to please Thee.

"*Sunday, April* 24*th*, 1853.—Heard a very good

sermon from 'Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.' Oh, does not this but too truly apply to me? Am I not often afraid of confessing Christ before men? O Jesus, make me to care less for the opinion of man, and more, far more, of what Thou thinkest. Went to hear Mr Maturin at St Luke's,—a very good sermon, and enjoyed it. O Jesus, may the remembrance of my having again approached Thy table, and renewed my vows to Thee, cause me to live closer to Thee for the rest of my life; and do Thou, blessed Spirit, warm this cold heart of mine!"

CHAPTER V.

Home.

"True to the kindred points of heaven and home."

Wordsworth.

THE 97th landed in England in the month of May 1853, and went into barracks at Walmer. Shortly after his arrival, Hedley Vicars wrote the following letter, which is characteristic of the warmth of his gratitude for spiritual benefit:—

TO DR TWINING.

"*Walmer Barracks, June* 8, 1853.

"MY VERY DEAR DR TWINING,—When I wished you farewell from the deck of the *Simoom*, I felt that I was parting with my best earthly friend, and although homeward bound I never felt more truly depressed. And, oh! what a Sunday, what a contrast to the happy Sabbaths I had passed for the previous eighteen months! I shall never forget it. The band on the poop played lively and profane airs as we sailed out of the harbour. I might have liked it well enough any other day, but then it grated harshly on my ear. My thoughts, however, were in the garrison

chapel on shore, and I wished that I were sitting in my old seat, listening to the sound of your voice proclaiming pardon and peace through the blood of the cross.

"Then at the close of the day, instead of our delightful evening class, which we began by raising our voices in praise to our dear Redeemer, loud oaths and imprecations fell unceasingly on the ear; even in my cabin I could not escape the sound of them. This was the case every Sunday we were on board, excepting that we had a short service in the morning. We had some rough weather, but being a good sailor I did not mind it. I occupied the same cabin with Burton, and we had many serious conversations together on the things belonging to our eternal peace. He always knelt down morning and evening in prayer to his God, and I had every reason to value him as a companion.

"I think you were guilty of saying that I should probably forget you within a month after I left Halifax. You never were more mistaken, for I can assure you I never parted with any man for whom I felt a greater regard and esteem than yourself; and I often look back with pleasing recollections on the many days and months I have passed in your family. I cannot express the gratitude I feel towards you as being the instrument in God's hand of my conversion. May He reward you sevenfold! Oh, what would I

not give to have met you in my earlier years; but this perhaps is wrong, for everything is ordered wisely for us in the counsels of Providence. I do not believe there is a man in the regiment who had plunged deeper in sin and iniquity than he who now writes this against himself. I was in the full career of vice when I arrived in Halifax. It was your preaching, brought home with saving power to my heart by the power of the Holy Spirit, which stopped me, and I am, I trust, at length brought out of darkness to light, and from ignorance of God to a knowledge of his ways. I look upon myself as a monument of God's goodness, in that He allowed me time for repentance, and gave me an instructor, and guide—one who was not afraid to confess Christ crucified, and to preach faithfully the great truths of the Gospel. I would thank you, my dear Dr Twining, from the bottom of my heart, for all the good advice and counsel you have ever so kindly given me. I can shew my gratitude in one way, and I know you will value it: I have not bent my knees before the throne of grace for many a month without remembering you, nor shall you ever want my poor prayers. I trust that you may be made instrumental in the conversion of many more souls. *Continue, as you have hitherto done, to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified, and you must be successful. No other preaching will be of any avail, nor afford one*

ray of comfort to him who knows himself to be a lost and undone sinner.

"I have not time to write more; we are now quartered at Walmer Barracks, but are to move to the Tower of London early next week, and then to the camp on Cobham Common in July. The Adjutant-General at the inspection praised the appearance of the regiment very much.

"Just fancy, I have not yet been able to get leave to see my mother, though I have not seen her for nearly nine years. Give my love to Mrs Twining. I believe every officer in the regiment feels her attention and motherly kindness to poor Jones. May God bless her for it! Give my love also to all your family, and remember me to my Halifax friends. I enclose a note from Corporal Sweeney. I am glad to say he is getting on very well, also Daim, Ackroyd, Fussell, Young, Bills, and Hylyard. May God Almighty bless you and all your family for Jesus Christ's sake! —Ever believe me, my dear Dr Twining, yours with sincerest esteem and regard,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

On the same day he responds to the expression of his mother's earnest longing to see his face again, after nine years' separation, in these words:—

"It gives me much pain, my own dearest mother,

to be obliged again to disappoint you, but it cannot be helped; so I beseech you not to fret yourself on my account. Your letters breathe such love and anxiety to see me, that I feel half inclined to desert!

"I am delighted to hear that your health is good. God grant that it may long continue so! I want to know whether you find from experience that your love to Christ now is less warm, less palpable to yourself than when you were first converted? I feel that it is so with me—at least that I have not a crucified Saviour ever before me as I once had; and I do not feel so much anxiety as I once did for the souls around me. Then, again, at times, I parley with the tempter by listening to his suggestions instead of casting them from me at the onset. But JESUS DIED FOR ME. I trust, by the grace of God that the devil will never be able to induce me to give up this precious truth."

Their happy meeting followed soon afterwards. The long-desired leave came at last, and on the evening of the 15th of June, he arrived unexpectedly at home whilst his family were at church attending a week-day service. The joy of that meeting was one with which a stranger intermeddleth not.

To the family and friends of Hedley Vicars, the year which followed his return home was one of interest and happiness of no common kind. The heart of

his widowed mother "sang for joy" as she marked "the exceeding grace of God in him," and his sisters and brother found him to be at once a cheerful companion, a faithful friend, and a wise adviser. The time of his leave was chiefly spent at Terling Place, Essex, the seat of his brother-in-law, Lord Rayleigh, whose brotherly kindness and Christian love made his house truly a home to Hedley Vicars.

Here he enjoyed the unreserved interchange of warm affection with every member of his family. He shared his sisters' pursuits with animated interest. They walked and rode together, or he read to them from his favourite authors. But their music was his chief enjoyment:—

"When in the all-golden afternoon
A guest or happy sister sung,
Or here she brought the harp and flung
A ballad to the brightening moon.

Nor less it pleased in livelier mood
Beyond the bounding hills to stray,
And break the livelong summer day
With banquet in the distant wood."

His sunshiny temper and buoyant spirits made him the idol of his sister's children, and endless was the number of stories which entranced his young auditors in the long summer twilight or by the cheerful winter fireside. Stories improvised for the occasion, concerning wandering adventurers in "foreign

parts," or dead heroes of bygone wars—leaders of forlorn hopes, who triumphed over unheard-of difficulties, and died amidst unimaginable successes. The very sight of his face seemed a signal for cheerfulness.

He walked in the glorious liberty of the sons of God, and with the free heart of a child enjoyed every pleasure in the gift of which he could trace his Father's hand; yet was there still the evidence in his daily life of a chastened and sobered spirit, and of his steadfast obedience to his Master's word, "WATCH AND PRAY."

With the thankful approbation of the Vicar of Terling, whose gifted and faithful ministry he greatly valued, Hedley Vicars visited the sick and aged poor of the village. They all loved him, but with the old women he was an especial favourite. His courteous manners, worn as much for them, as if each had been a Queen-Dowager, won his way to their hearts at once, and gained a willing hearing for the message he loved to bear.

"Everywhere he was followed by affection and respect," writes one* whose graceful sketch of his brief history has already appeared in the pages of a religious periodical. "There was no mistaking the spirit of the Christian in the manly independence, the genuine humility, the open, unselfish heart, and the

* Rev. T. D. Bernard, Vicar of Terling.

singleness of purpose, which ever seemed to say, 'One thing have I desired,—one thing I do.'"

But chiefly did he delight in speaking of the things which belonged to their everlasting peace, to those who were nearest and dearest to his heart.

"It was something so very new and precious," said the sister who had been the chief friend of his boyhood, and had maintained the most frequent correspondence with him in his long absence, "to have a tender brother who gave one the loving protection of a father, and the faithful counsel of a friend." Daily did they gather round him for the study of the Word of God, and after the nightly farewells to the drawing-room circle, he met his mother and sisters again, for holy conversation and prayer.

Precious, indeed, must have been those too fleeting hours of unreserved fellowship of hearts, dimly foreshadowing a more lasting and perfect communion yet to be.

That this tender interest in their best welfare was sustained in absence, will be seen by his letters written at this period:—

"TO MISS VICARS.

"*Walmer, July* 4, 1853.

"MY DEAREST MARY,—I received your letter on Friday last, and began to answer it yesterday, but could not finish it. O, my beloved sister, how I love

to hear you speak about Christ; and what comfort, what cause for abundant gratitude to our heavenly Father, ought each of us to find in the cheering belief that we are knit together in the blood-bought bonds of the Saviour's love; that our hearts, wayward, changeable, naturally evil, (as they ever will be here), have been made the temples of the Holy Ghost; that they have been renewed by his blessed influence, and that the work of sanctification is now going on within them, making us meet for the inheritance which our dear Redeemer has purchased for us!

"I am sure many Christians deprive themselves of much real benefit and assistance by withholding communion with each other. We cannot expect to reach perfection in righteousness, dearest Mary; but, whilst humbling ourselves in the dust for our manifold iniquities, let us often, by counsel and persuasion, urge each other to put on a cheerful courage, and to run with patience the race set before us, never forgetting to look to Jesus, the Alpha and Omega of our hopes.

"Oh, that we all felt more delight in speaking of the unbounded love of Him who was crucified for us! Let us always endeavour to be looking for the coming of Christ Jesus; and then when He does come in the clouds, with the glory and majesty of a sovereign, we shall be found amongst them who love His appearing.

"O my sweet sister, what are we that God should single us out from the millions that are still living without Him in the world; that He should cause us to believe the precious truths revealed in the Gospel of his dear Son, which are foolishness to the natural man, but to us (and to all believers) are the wisdom of God and the power of God! Let us pray often for each other. The affection that prompts to this is love indeed.

"My love to all. Clara and Edward are at Chobham, I suppose. Tell Clara, she cannot feel more sorry than I am, that I could not get leave, to be able to meet her there. Tell Lord Rayleigh, with my love, that I sent my groom off this morning at six o'clock for the mare, and will write when she comes, to let him know how I like her.

"Ever, my darling little sister,

"Your most attached brother,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

Part of the months of July and August were passed in camp at Chobham. He thus graphically described its scenes to his youngest sister:—

"*Chobham, August* 17.

". . . I think you would laugh if you saw me in my bell tent, sitting on a camp-stool, at a box with four legs to represent a table. The furniture of

my *room* consists of a camp bedstead, portmanteau, and tub.

"I have plenty of straw, but it is rather mouldy. My servant endeavoured to get up a small garden in front, but I fear the shrubs must have been minus roots, for they seem in a very sickly state, as if the soil of Chobham did not agree with them!

"I spent a very pleasant day on Thursday. Uncle Edward* gave me a ticket for the Naval Review at Spithead. I went, with about two hundred officers from the Camp. We had a large steamer to ourselves, and consequently were able to see everything. It was a very grand and imposing spectacle: but you have seen the whole account in the papers, so I will not describe it.

"The Camp is to be broken up next Saturday, when we are to proceed to Canterbury. I shall not be sorry to be once more settled in quarters, as I find it difficult in this place to obtain those seasons of retirement for holding communion with my heavenly Father, which are so necessary to the keeping alive of religion in the soul."

In the month of August, not without regret, he resigned the Adjutancy of his regiment, in consequence of circumstances which need not be mentioned here. His best friends not only fully justified him in

* Colonel Vicars, R.E., who commanded the Engineers at Chobham.

taking this step, but valued him the more for the reasons which led to it.

In the following letter, he alludes briefly to his painful feelings on this occasion:—

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*August* 1854.

"My dearest Mother,— . . . I remember well the unenviable state of my feelings, whilst stretched on the straw, with nothing to disturb me but the tramp of the sentry in front of my tent door. I fancied myself deserted by every one, even by my God. I cannot tell you what I suffered then. At last I thought, 'Oh, for some Christian friend to converse with me!' Just then I heard a voice saying, 'Mr Vicars, are you at home?' I jumped up, and saw a Mr Rigley, a home missionary, whom I had seen in the tent on Sundays. I invited him in, and we sat side by side on the straw for more than an hour, conversing on those delightful subjects, the Sinner's Friend and the Christian's Home. Oh, the comfort of meeting with a child of God, when Satan has been assaulting you and tempting you to despair! We knelt on the ground, and leaning against the tent-pole, prayed together. What a soothing influence has prayer over the soul! But it is the Holy Spirit who prompts us; and to Him be all the glory.

"A Christian has certainly his moments of bitter-

ness and anguish; but I would not change even these for the world's moments of jollity and mirth. The former generally precede happy hours of peace and calm; and the latter, I know, end in trouble and remorse.

> "'Tis religion that can give
> Sweetest pleasures whilst we live;
> 'Tis religion must supply
> Solid comfort when we die.'

"When on guard I was struck with a proof that God is no respecter of persons, and has his own people in every class. I saw two miserable, wretched-looking men, picking up pieces of rag, as I thought, in front of the guard tents; after they had collected several, they sat down. I went to them, and found they were collecting bits of meat and biscuit, which had been thrown away by the men after their dinner, and were covered with dirt. These they ate ravenously. I got them some *clean* meat and a loaf of bread, and conversed with them for about ten minutes.

"They seemed surprised at an officer, in 'such fine clothes,' talking to *them* about Christ. One of them had been a stoker on a railway, who had been run over by a train, which had smashed his foot and hand. Yet he could talk with delight of the mercy of God his Saviour, and of his goodness and forbearance. Who knows but that I may meet and recognise those poor fellows in heaven?

"We started from camp on Saturday morning at five o'clock, and marched to Woking station, distant about five miles from Chobham. During a half-hour's halt on the road, I fell to nutting, as nuts were plentiful in the hedges, and back went my thoughts to the days of my boyhood.

"We are now quartered at Canterbury. On Sunday evening I went to Mr Lee Warner's church, and heard a beautiful sermon, from 'Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him.' A brother officer of mine told me that he went to a church which was decked out just like a Roman Catholic chapel, and the minister, in urging the necessity of good works, stated that they, and they alone, could bring a man peace of mind at the last. The name of Jesus was only mentioned once. It is grievous that those who preach 'another gospel' (Gal. i. 8) should be permitted to remain in the Church, to misguide and deceive. Let us thank God that we have not so learned Christ; and that, instead of trusting to, or attaching any degree of merit to our own righteousness, which is but as filthy rags, we can look to Jesus as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

A short leave in September enabled him to spend a few days with his mother at Southend. Those days were chiefly passed on the water, where he exer-

cised the somewhat renowned prowess of his strong arm in rowing, whilst his mother accompanied him in the boat, and they took sweet counsel together. Well does she love to linger in saddened remembrance over those hours of delight, which can return to her on earth no more for ever.

TO HIS MOTHER.

"My darling Mother,—I left you yesterday with no slight feelings of regret, as you might easily imagine if you had ever been a son. I agree with G., that there is but little of 'the real thing' in the world, and therefore a man values a *mother's love* the more.

"At the railway station, I met two of my brother officers returning from leave, to rejoin the regiment. We had the carriage to ourselves, and I occupied myself in reading Hugh White's 'Sermons on the Second Advent.' I hesitated to bring it out for some time, lest they should ask me what I was reading, but overcame at last this wretched false shame. I suppose they guessed pretty well what sort of a book I had in hand, and so went off to sleep without taking the trouble to inquire.

"Cay came to my room at night, and we had a pleasant conversation together. We read Romans viii., and prayed. I felt very happy then, but after he left, about eleven o'clock, I fell asleep whilst

praying by myself. I know my Saviour has forgiven me; but I really cannot well forgive myself, and feel much pain at the recollection of my slothfulness and irreverence. When I awoke this morning I was enabled to pray fervently for you, dearest mother, and for Clara, Mary, Georgie, and Edward, individually. I know no greater happiness than that which earnest prayer brings to the heart, when, undisturbed by wandering thoughts, we can behold our crucified Redeemer, and hear his voice pleading for us before the mercy-seat.

"To-day I called on Captain Ingram, and enjoyed a walk with him. He is a truly Christian man. I have just been reading Haweis' 'Spiritual Companion to the Lord's Supper.' I have not partaken of that blessed feast since I was at Terling, but trust to do so next Sunday, please God. May that holy sacrament call to my mind in more vivid remembrance the great evil of sin; for never was it seen so forcibly as when written in a Saviour's agony and bloody sweat, and in his cross and passion."

TO LADY RAYLEIGH.

"There is much in the signs of the times to make us believe that the Redeemer's advent is near. It *may* be, we shall not taste of death, but be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Beloved sister, let us live in hourly expectation of that solemn yet joyful

event. Let us judge of our own state by the happiness the thought gives us, and not rest satisfied until the language of our hearts shall be, 'Even so come, Lord Jesus.'

"I cannot tell you how much happiness I find in the society of our dearest mother. I can see her ripening for glory, and have already derived much benefit from our intercourse and communion. My leave lasts till the 31st of December; and I shall spend most of the time with her in London."

LETTER TO CAPTAIN TROTTER (LATE 2D LIFE GUARDS).

"*Canterbury, August* 26, 1853.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Having had the pleasure of hearing you address a few Christian soldiers at Chobham, and knowing that you have the cause of Christ at heart, I feel no hesitation in writing to you on the subject of the 'Army Prayer Union.' I never, indeed, saw the tract headed with this title until then, or I should have sent you my name and address. I can only say that I shall be too glad to join in an object which, with the blessing of God, must prove so conducive to the spread of Christianity in the army, and, at the same time, promote the increase of personal holiness amongst those who have really come out from the world and are enrolled under the banners of Christ. There is surely abundant cause for thanks-

giving and praise to Him, the Author of all good, that so large a number as 300 should have avowed themselves to be *praying Christians*. Oh! that He 'who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and hath shined in *our* hearts,' would add largely to their number, and give to many thousands of soldiers who are still living in ignorance of Him 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ!'

"Until within the last two years I cared not for any of these things, but lived as, alas! too many around me are now doing. But the 'blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all sin*;' and, having found mercy of the Lord, I would send you my name as one of those who, in dependance on the Holy Spirit, will not fail to contribute his prayer for the attainment of the several objects which have been suggested, and to which every child of God must give his hearty approval. And oh! may our blessed Saviour be present with us on these solemn and interesting occasions, and may his Holy Spirit be poured abundantly upon all of us, that thus our joy and peace may be increased, our faith become stronger, and our desires after holiness more fervent! Then we may trust that, through the merits and bloodshedding of our precious Redeemer, we shall obtain far more than we can either ask or think.

"I would suggest that every member of the happy

'Army Prayer Union' subscribe a small sum each to defray the cost of sending circulars to every officer in the service, for I have no doubt that there are many (as in my own case and that of two of my brother officers) who have never heard of it; and I would further recommend that we should have a public meeting once a-year, in London or elsewhere, to be opened and closed with prayer. All those at home might thus assemble together, and I think we should thereby become acquainted with one another, and strengthen that bond of union which we all have as members of Christ's body. I would finish this note with a prayer to our Heavenly Father, that we, and all who profess to be Christians, may have more and more of the mind that is in Christ, and, being temples of the Holy Ghost, may shew forth the glory of God our Saviour in all things.

"I would remain, my dear Sir, in the best of bonds,

"Yours, very sincerely,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

"ARMY PRAYER UNION, FOR BOTH OFFICERS AND MEN.

"'Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.' (Matt. xviii. 19.)

"'And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, He heareth us.' (1 John v. 14.)

"You are invited to unite on the first of each month

specially, and also every Sunday morning, with others of the Lord's people formerly in the army, or now serving at home and abroad, in either social or private prayer, as may be most convenient in *each locality*. The following objects are suggested:—

"1. That we may have a deeper sense of our own sinfulness, failure, and neglect in watching unto prayer for opportunities to serve and glorify our God.

"2. That, as children of God, we may increasingly manifest our union with Jesus, our risen Lord, by a life more simply devoted to His service, a more watchful, subdued, and prayerful spirit, with greater delight in His word—more oneness with His people and love for the souls of others, greater self-denial and victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil, and that we may energetically seek to honour and use the Lord's-day.

"3. That, in dependance on the Holy Spirit, more energy may be used for the spread of the truth as it is in Jesus, in the army, and that God may be pleased to bless the efforts already made, to the conversion of many, and the strengthening of those converted to stand out as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

"4. That our hearts may be raised up in praise and *thanksgiving* to God for His loving-kindness and long-suffering towards us, sparing us till now, and giving us *any* desire to use those open doors of service which He still graciously affords us—as well as

for every measure of blessing which has followed the means already used.

" 5. That we fail not to remember the Queen, and all those who are in positions of authority and responsibility, danger or difficulty, as well as all ministers, schoolmasters, schools, hospitals, widows, wives, and children connected with the service.

' " *Names.*

" 6. That we acknowledge with thankfulness that, within two or three months of the issuing of the first edition of this paper, a Union for Prayer for the Royal Navy, and another for the Corps of Royal Engineers, were circulated in a similar manner to our own. The day and hour fixed by the former is every Sunday, from seven to eleven A.M., and the latter every Monday. Within six months 300 names were recorded on our list.

" Any suggestions, as well as the names and addresses *now*, and from time to time, of any who wish to join in this object, will be thankfully received, post-paid, by Captain Trotter, late 2d Life Guards. It is intended, occasionally, to communicate by way of remembrance with every person who shall give an address in the United Kingdom, whence letters can be forwarded if they are abroad.

" *Dyrham Park, Barnet, Herts, England,*
June 1851."

CHAPTER VI.

Friendship.

"By friendship I suppose you mean the greatest love, and the greatest usefulness, and the most open communication, and the noblest sufferings, and the most exemplary faithfulness, and the severest truth, and the heartiest counsel, and the greatest union of minds of which brave men and women are capable."

Jeremy Taylor.

HITHERTO it is from the testimony of others, that this imperfect outline has been given of the life and character of Hedley Vicars. But now it was to be our happy privilege to gather from personal observation, and in the enjoyment of no common Christian friendship, the blessed proofs of how exceeding abundant was the grace of Christ towards him.

In the month of October of the same year, my father, my sister, and I were renewing a friendship of former days by a visit to Terling-place. A letter was received on the morning of the 11th by Lady Rayleigh, promising a visit from her brother, which caused such a tumult of joyous excitement at the breakfast-table, and so much shouting and clapping of hands amongst the children, as soon as the news was made known to them, that, in my ignorance, I supposed the young soldier had only just arrived from Nova Scotia. At dinner that day, he was beside me. Not knowing anything of his character, I ventured rather cautiously at first, on subjects one would fain

have the faithful courage to speak of to every fellow-creature. At the first touch of the chord, his pleasant countenance lighted up, and his eyes glistened as I told him of a remarkable instance of the grace of God connected with my father's first sermon.

On his renewing the conversation in the evening, I said, half-inquiringly, "These subjects seem to have an interest for you?"

"Nothing in the world is worth calling interesting by their side," he answered, with a fervour which told its own story; and then gave me an outline of the manner in which God had worked the great change in his own soul. With forceful simplicity he told the point of the story; how the words, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," became the sheet-anchor of his soul; adding, "Thus was I born again of the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

The next day he walked with my father about the gardens; and it was pleasant to see the affection which at once sprung up between the "veteran of the cross" and the young soldier of the cross and of his country.

From that visit we date a friendship which cannot be replaced on earth, and the prolonged enjoyment of which is reserved for heaven.

Early in November, he spent a few days with us at Beckenham, and the visit proved to us indeed "a time

of refreshing." On the Sabbath, he taught twice in the school, and between the afternoon and evening services visited a stranger afflicted with paralysis, then lodging in the village; a man of considerable intellectual cultivation, inquiring after truth, but fettered by a long habit of scepticism. For him the singleness, honesty, and fervour of Hedley Vicars' character had a peculiar charm. The few strong, earnest words which he said in explanation of a passage of Scripture, and the simplicity and reality of his prayer, produced an impression which was never effaced, and was deepened by every succeeding visit.

After the school-room service, he addressed and prayed with several Railway men, then working at the Crystal Palace grounds, who assembled for a "cottage reading" every Sunday evening, and conducted the little service with them on the following evening in the servants' hall at the Rectory. The next day he went to read and pray with a Roman Catholic who was then seriously ill, and saw him again, once or oftener, on each succeeding visit to us.

Not many weeks after the news of Captain Vicars' death had spread a general sorrow over Beckenham, this man expressed a wish to attend one of the evening cottage readings. "I have thought so much of the Bible," he said, "since Captain Vicars told me what it was to him, and how those words about the blood of the Lord Jesus gave him peace."

On the day just referred to, he met at dinner a young naval officer, who was then at the outset of his Christian course. It seemed to be the easiest thing possible for Hedley Vicars to fall in with the current of those first fresh feelings, and to shew where lay the rocks and quicksands to be avoided. The union of becoming seriousness with perfect ease and simplicity in his religious conversation seldom failed to engage the interest of those who met him. His genuine humility, combined, as it was, with manly frankness and a cheerful, spirited address, gave a charm to all that he said.

But the thing which distinguished him from the generality even of other Christians, was the close, personal, friendlike knowledge he possessed of his Saviour. "Some of his expressions, in conversation and correspondence," remarked one of his friends, "almost startled me into the inquiry, Is it only a difference in degree, or wholly a difference in kind, from these faint prayers of mine, when he speaks as if he had not only spoken to his Saviour, but had been answered back again by a living friend?"

Before his next visit to us, we met him several times in London. There we found him teaching in Lord Shaftesbury's Ragged Schools, visiting repentant thieves, and diving into the depths of metropolitan wretchedness with city missionaries. Love to the crucified Saviour, who had loved him and given Him-

self for him, constrained this young soldier of Christ to consecrate every power as a living sacrifice to God. The sense of duty, always strong, doubly so in his renewed nature, seemed again almost lost in his high and deep sense of the privilege of such a service, and in a yearning desire to bring others to rejoice with himself in a free pardon through the blood of the Lamb.

TO HIS YOUNGEST SISTER.

"Much do I wish that I had taken more advantage of our being together to have spoken to you on *the great subject*. What I want is to persuade you that there is reality in religion, and that true happiness is to be found in it, and in it alone. Give your heart to Christ, my darling sister, and you will never repent your choice. Let us pray earnestly that we may be delivered from the *power* of sin, that our evil tempers may be mortified and subdued, and that we may more closely resemble our Redeemer. . . . . .

"When I left you, or rather you left me, I proceeded to search for the London Reformatory for Thieves, in Smith Street, Westminster; and after going through it, I offered to say a few words to the inmates about the Saviour of sinners. Just then, however, their attendance was required at a public meeting, which was opened by Lord Shaftesbury.

Their 'hall' is but a small one, so not many people could be present. The reformed thieves numbered about a hundred and twenty. I must say that I felt strongly inclined to *make a muff of myself* when they sang the anthem, 'I will arise and go to my Father.' When they had finished, I was obliged to leave, not to lose the train."

Soon after his second visit to us, I received the following letter:—

"*Terling Place, December* 15.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—In answer to your kind and encouraging letter, I cannot begin otherwise than by thanking Him 'who ordereth all things,' for his goodness in having so providentially led me to Terling at the time you were there, and thus a friendship was formed which, I trust, will last for ever. In every blessing I receive, I would raise my heart in gratitude and praise to that God who has poured such mercies upon me.

"In this, my first letter to you, I would be candid and unreserved. I do not wish to be thought better than I am, but rather desire to be looked upon as but a *young* soldier in Christ. When I bring to remembrance the years I have spent in sin, when I gloried in being the ringleader in every species of dissipation and folly, the thought has struck me that it

were presumptuous in me now to rank myself amongst the followers of the Lamb. But in doing so, I would only conceal my unworthiness in the spotless robe of my Redeemer's perfect righteousness.

"Notwithstanding the advantages of Christian education and godly parents, the dictates of reason and the remorse of conscience, I lived for many years in total forgetfulness of a death-bed and a judgment-day. But that God, who might so justly have cut me off in the full career of rebellion, at length, (and oh! how feebly can I express my sense of his goodness!) opened my eyes; and that stubborn heart, which neither the terrors of hell could deter nor the wrath of God restrain from recklessly pursuing the path of destruction, HE softened and changed by shewing me the love and tenderness I was despising and trampling under foot. I can never forget the intensity of my feelings when first I *saw* my Saviour on the cross, nor the flood of joy which burst in upon my soul, when I read in his flowing blood full pardon for all that was past.

"Years have gone by since then, but I have been preserved by his grace and kept by his power from falling away, and thus dishonouring the Christian profession. I need scarcely tell *you* that I have never had cause to repent the transfer of my allegiance from the Destroyer to the Saviour of men. Surely, having been forgiven so much, I ought to

love much, and unite with others in making known the Redeemer's love to those who are ignorant and out of the way. And what a balm for the weary and heavy-laden, what a cure for the guilty, is offered alike to all in the Gospel of Christ! And oh, what a glorious truth, when brought home to the anxious heart by the Holy Spirit,—what a sweet and precious doctrine is there set forth! FULL and FREE forgiveness, perfect acceptance and assured reconciliation with God; and this already effected by Divine mercy, and sealed with the sufferings and death of the Son of God.

"Mr ——'s letter delighted me much. I thank God for the work which has been so evidently begun in *his* heart. (Oh that *every* soldier and sailor knew the love of Christ!) I have already prayed for him more than once, and trust that the oftener I do so the more fervent may be my petitions. Such wonderful answers as you have had to prayer for the souls of others will, I trust, lead me (and you too) more frequently to the Throne of Grace, and to rely more implicitly upon the promise of Him who changeth not. 'If any two of you shall agree upon earth touching anything that ye shall ask, it *shall* be granted you of my Father which is in heaven.'

"My leave is rapidly drawing to a close; on the 31st I rejoin my regiment. Perhaps we shall not meet again for a long time. Be this as it may, I can

never forget my friends at Beckenham, nor the happy days I have spent with them.

"I shall have much pleasure in calling on Major Halkett, as soon as I am at Canterbury. The manuscript account of Dr Reeve's illness and death, I will leave at Miss Leycester's as I pass through London. It has deeply interested me. May you have many such crowns of rejoicing in the day 'when the Lord Jesus shall come to make up his jewels.'

"Give my affectionate and grateful regards to Dr Marsh. What a bright and noble specimen is he of the Christian soldier—the veteran of the Cross; and what an encouragement is it to those who are only 'beginners,' to see such a proof of the reality of religion, and its transforming power in the heart and life! Give my Christian love to all, and remember me to the sick man whom I went to see. Tell him that I pray for him, and trust that his fears and doubts may soon be dispelled, and that he may be enabled to rejoice in God his Saviour. 'Looking unto Jesus' is the secret of peace.

"In bringing this long letter to a close, might I ask you to pray for me? God bless you, and make your efforts abundantly successful in bringing sinners to a Saviour, shall be the humble prayer of your grateful and sincere friend,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

During the illness of my sister, in January 1854, we felt the full value of his Christian sympathy. Earnestly did he pray for her recovery, and thankfully rejoiced with us in the answer which God gave to our prayers.

Before our anxiety was over, he was seeking kindred help from us. A severe attack of illness under which his mother was suffering, weighed heavily on his heart, though it did not shackle the freeness and almost daily communication of his Christian sympathies.

TO HIS MOTHER.

"Earnestly have I prayed, dearest, best of mothers, that as is thy day so may thy strength be. What a blessed comfort it is that we have an open Bible within reach when struck down by sickness or affliction; for at such dark seasons, if it were not for that precious book, we might doubt that 'God is love.' But surely there is balm for every woe *there*. '*All* things work together for good to them that love God.' 'That which we know not now we shall know hereafter.' When Job, complaining of his friends' cruelty, declared his misery to them, and besought them to have pity upon him, for the hand of God had touched him, suddenly he finds comfort elsewhere, and in joyous triumph exclaims, 'Oh that my words were

now written! Oh that they were printed in a book, that they were graven with an iron pen in the rock for ever—*for I know that my Redeemer liveth!*'"

A letter to his eldest sister, a few days afterwards, expressed the overflowings of his thankful heart for the mercy of his mother's restoration. Towards its close, he thus wrote:—

"Let us earnestly pray for each other that we may have that vitality and love which *a seen and accepted Christ* alone can kindle within our hearts. We must watch and pray, lest the things of this world draw off our hearts from the one thing needful, and make us forget that here we have no continuing city. But though we are weak, Christ is strong; and his strength is made perfect in our weakness. Let us look to our incarnate God, who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross and despised the shame.

"Now, to tell you some news of my daily life. On Wednesday I drove out with Major Halkett, 4th Light Dragoons, to Chilham Castle, and we had pleasant religious conversation on our way. The castle crowns the hill of the village of Chilham, and looks very old. Mr Wildman was not at home, but we saw Mrs Wildman. She is a delightful Christian.

How invigorating it is to meet with such. She took us to see the old church. Some of the epitaphs in the churchyard are very absurd. An old lady signifies to the world that she 'died fully persuaded of the many virtues of her dear husband;' and others were of similar import. The park and the views from it are beautiful. We drove back well pleased with our visit.

"On Thursday I was dining with a nice family, four miles from Canterbury, and met a large party. I noticed opposite to me a very pleasant-looking fellow, and was struck with his quiet, calm manner and countenance.

"After we had adjourned to the drawing-room, I asked him if he belonged to the Army Prayer-union? and when he said, 'Yes,' we became friends at once. He said, 'There is a man in the 97th whom I want to know; his name is Vicars.' I replied, 'There is a man in the Rifle Brigade whom I want to know; it is Captain Hammond.'* We were at each other's service!

"On Saturday he came to call upon me, and

* Captain Maximilian Hammond, Rifle Brigade. This brave officer and devoted Christian fell in the Redan, whilst "making a pathway for his men," in the final assault on Sebastopol, September 8, 1855,—honoured and beloved by all who knew him. Faithful unto death, in the service of the King of kings, as in his duty to his Queen and country, he has received, we doubt not, a crown of glory which fadeth not away.

stayed for some time. He is a delightful fellow. I sent for Cay, and we had a happy time of communion together. . . . . It is a great blessing having such a brother officer as Cay. He is one of a thousand. We often walk together, and he generally comes up to my barrack-room after mess, and we read the Bible, converse about heavenly things, and end in prayer."

"*Canterbury, Monday Morning.*

"My dear Friend,—As my last hurried note was indeed but a poor apology for a letter, I must write a few lines to-day. 'They that feared the Lord spake often one to another;' and what time more fitting and appropriate in which to express the thoughts of our hearts towards Jesus, than just after the sweet and refreshing enjoyment of his day? For when is the fragrant dew of his Holy Spirit poured so largely on our souls as on those days of 'heaven upon earth?'

"I remember, alas! too well, the time when I dreaded the return of Sunday, and considered it both dull and tedious, but now surely no day is so cheering and delightful, and there is none that passes away so quickly. I recollect, that for several months, the only inward sanctifying proof I could, on examination, bring to assure myself that I had indeed been made an 'heir of Christ,' was this longing desire for the Lord's-day.

"You will be surprised to hear that I (a red-hot Protestant!) went to the Roman Catholic chapel yesterday morning. Yes! but it was only as Protestant officer, in charge of the Roman Catholic soldiers. The weather was raw, bleak, and damp,—fit emblem of the service, which was formal, dreary, and icy cold. I felt very much oppressed, and sick at heart, as I thought of the poor misguided, deluded men who knelt around; even keeping silence was wearisome to me, for I longed to speak to them of Jesus, and bid them look to the Lamb of God, the Saviour of sinners. I thought to myself, too, while listening to a mere moral essay, 'And is it to such a man you confess your sins, and forget Jesus, the Sinner's Friend? thus flying to "broken cisterns," when the living fountain is ever near.' I returned home, feeling quite wretched. It was too late to go to church, but I enjoyed a happy season in my barrack-room, when I did not forget you and all your friends, including the navvies. I went in the afternoon to Mr White's church, where I heard an excellent sermon from the words, 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof;' and again in the evening, when Mr Lee Warner preached most powerfully on the text, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in

my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.' Is it not a wonderful prophecy? and how overflowing with comfort and consolation for us! With such a bright vision unfolded to the believer, the 'captive exile may well hasten to be free.'

"I met Major Halkett, on coming out of church, and we walked home together. I had a very pleasant conversation with him. He seems to have the cause of Christ at heart, and to be anxious to know more of the Saviour, experimentally. He asked me to drink tea with him; and I then saw Mrs Halkett for the first time, as she was ill when I called. We spent a happy and profitable evening. I like them both very much.

"I had a delightful conversation, a few days ago, with a young corporal who left my company a short time since. He has been, for nearly three years, a consistent follower of Christ, and I am proud to say he is still 'fighting the good fight of faith.' But we must expect to have the *bitter* as well as the *sweet.* I grieve to say that one, of whom I had great hopes, has deserted his colours, and gone back,—poor fellow, I deeply pity him! I trust it may prove a warning lesson to me, to watch and pray more constantly and fervently, and 'take heed' lest I also fall. But I will never give up any man—Jesus did not give *me*

up—and I hope and look to his being brought back to the fold.

"What you said in your letter about spiritual pride, I feel to be very applicable to myself at times; but when I am so inclined to forget *who* and *what* I am, I endeavour to imagine the sinner standing *alone*, without a Saviour, and without the Holy Ghost; and the miserable wretched thought quickly makes me to know and feel my utter vileness and weakness!

"Give my Christian love to all; and 'now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hast given us everlasting salvation, and good hope through grace, *comfort your heart*, and stablish you in every good word and work.'

"Ever your deeply grateful and sincere friend,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

Early in February he received intelligence of the alarming illness of his uncle, Colonel Edward Vicars, R.E., at Gibraltar. He was on his way out to the East, intrusted with an important military command, when he was seized with an attack of paralysis, and was landed at Gibraltar, in danger of his life. His wife was not in health to undertake the voyage thither. In this extremity, Hedley, with characteristic unselfishness, at some personal inconvenience, immediately accepted the proposition to go in her place, and left

England within a few hours of obtaining leave from his Colonel.

From *himself* we should never have learnt how much of help and comfort, physically and spiritually, he afforded to the suffering invalid; though in every letter he expressed his admiration and respect for the heroic fortitude, and patient, thankful spirit, with which Colonel Vicars bore his mortifying disappointment and heavy affliction.

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Gibraltar, Feb.* 11.

"*On board a Coal Hulk.*

"DEAREST MOTHER,—Here I am, thank God, safe and sound; but, alas! in Quarantine for seven days. I sailed on the afternoon of the 4th, and had a prosperous voyage, and most delightful weather. I was in hopes I should have had a cabin to myself, but in this I was disappointed, having been doubled up with two cadets of the East India Company's Service. At first I was strongly inclined to avoid the reproach of the Cross, and not to make a mark of myself by kneeling down, or reading my Bible in their presence, before retiring to rest. But God gave me grace to overcome this. Still it shews me what a coward I am, that I should, even for an instant, be tempted to hide my colours, and ashamed to confess Christ.

"My usual and favourite hour for meditation was after all the rest had turned into their berths, when, with none on deck but the officer of the watch and the steersman, I could walk and think undisturbed. We had fine moonlight nights, and the still grandeur of the heavens brought the Nineteenth Psalm forcibly to my mind.

"The *Indus* arrived in the Bay of Gibraltar on the evening of the 9th; and I learnt that England was in quarantine with the Rock, owing to the cholera; and that I should have seven days to wait before I could go on land. This detention is truly unfortunate; I am so impatient to get to my poor uncle. But in little things, as well as great, we must learn to see the hand of God, and to remember that his infinite wisdom orders all."

CHAPTER VII.

The War.

"Farewell! I think we shall not meet again
Till it be in that land where never change
Is known, and those who love can part no more.
Commend me to my mother's prayers, and say
That never man enjoy'd a heavenlier peace
Than Roderick at this hour.—O faithful friends,
How dear ye are to me, these tears may tell."

Southey.

Scarcely had Hedley Vicars sailed for Gibraltar, when the startling order for an army to proceed to the East, shook the heart of peaceful England to its centre. Partings took place, such as had not been known in the land for forty years, and farewell blessings were given, to extend over fields of bloodshed and death.

"*Pray for him*" was the watchword from friend to friend, as a husband, a son, or a brother, went forth to fight the battles of his country. Every sight of the Queen's uniform called forth emotions of generous enthusiasm from all conditions of men; and efforts were made by those who felt that higher interests were at stake than of this mortal life only, to carry the message of peace to men who were on the eve of being engaged in the horrors of war. Every pulse of the country beat only for her soldier sons.

Each time the newspaper was unfolded, the number of some fresh regiment, ordered to hold itself in readiness for active service, or the brief notice of a troop

transport having sailed, brought home the trial to the hearts of hundreds more.

At length came the notice of the 97th being under orders. The pang with which this announcement was read by those to whom the name of Hedley Vicars had become so dear, may well be imagined. As his friends had been under the impression that he might be detained at Gibraltar, until he joined his regiment there, on his way to the East, it was an indescribable relief to them to find that he was again in England, and that they should see his face once more.

The following letters were written shortly after his return :—

"*Windsor, March* 15.

"My very dear Friend,—Thank you very much for your valued letter, which affected me not a little. We are, as far as men can judge, on the eve of war; and I shall soon, perhaps, be engaged in all the horrors of battle. But even *then*, believe me, I shall ever remember with deepest gratitude the friend who has so often cheered and comforted my too cold and wavering heart.

"But there are some things in your letter which grieve me. Your heart is sorrowful. I have felt more than once that peculiar bitterness which your soul has so lately experienced, and I can therefore fully sympathise with you. When we have, as we

fondly hoped, been blessed by God in bringing a fellow-sinner into the fold of Christ, and when that often-prayed-for and yearned-over one has given many proofs which, both to ourselves and to the world in which he moves, appear decisive, it goes to the heart's quick to see or hear of such turning his back on an ever-loving and long-suffering Saviour, and going once more hand in hand with his bitterest enemy. It is not so much, perhaps, fear for the souls of those poor erring men which causes us that sickness and weariness of heart; for we know that when a man sins, 'he has an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous;' and do you not think that in praying for the backslider, we seem to see the day of his repentance near again? But what tongue can tell the injury that is done to the cause of Christ? And this, alas, is irrevocable! But, dear friend, let us not dwell upon this painful subject. Each returning day proclaims aloud in our ears, 'Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation,' bidding us *never* to despair, for while there is breath there is hope, but rather calling us to lay out ourselves afresh and begin the battle again.

"I feel for you very, very much, and still more for poor W—— and H——, who have been at length overcome by the all-enticing snares of Satan (oh, how long he had *me* completely in his net!). The temptations in the wild roving life those poor fellows lead,

must be strong. But we will unite our prayers for their recovery, and hope and *believe* (as I do still in the similar case of two or three of my soldiers) they will be attracted again to the cross of Jesus. We may conclude that when a soul has indeed tasted of its sweet comfort, that the pleasures which once satisfied, lose their charm, and appear but empty shadows, and, therefore, that it will find no rest until it return to the sinner's refuge. When I hear of and see others wandering from the Good Shepherd, I cannot help thinking to myself, 'And who art thou, that *thou* shouldst be preserved?' Surely there is no safety but in Jesus—in clinging to his cross.

"I followed a poor sergeant to his last home yesterday, and now the mournful notes of the dead march proclaim that another soldier is being carried to the same resting-place. These sudden deaths are warnings to be likewise ready.

"We are still very unsettled—nothing being known for certain as to our movements. When it is known I will tell you. I have just heard from my beloved mother. She tells me she has a letter from you full of sympathy and comfort, and that she trusts a friendship is now established between both families which will last for ever. God for ever bless you for comforting her.—Ever your most affectionate friend and brother,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

" *Windsor, March* 21.

"My very dear Friend,—I received your dear, welcome letter on Sunday morning when I was on the castle guard. I intended answering it last night, but, from having been on guard one day and on regimental duty the next, I felt rather tired. My heart is warmed with deepest feelings of gratitude and affection towards you, and never imagine that either time, or absence, or anything else, will ever cause it to diminish: and what a blessing that the anchor of our love is firmly fixed beneath the cross of Christ, for such a friendship is sure and lasting, not merely held fast by the 'silver cord' of life, which may be snapped in a moment, but imbedded in the cleft of the rock for ever. God grant, dear friend, your love for Christ and devotion to his service may be blessed, not only in winning fresh jewels for the Saviour's crown, but in imparting stronger faith and more earnest zeal in the hearts of those who have been already visited by the Holy Ghost and melted by the Redeemer's 'agony and bloody sweat, and by his cross and passion.' I can *never* repay you for that onward and steadier progress which I feel that you have been instrumental, through the grace of God, in imparting to my Christian course. I should find it difficult to tell you what solid peace and elevated enjoyment I have derived from communion with my

best of all earthly friends. May the gladness and sunshine of the Saviour's presence ever more and more be inwardly experienced by you in all its glowing, quickening power and heavenly delight, as a rich foretaste of those pleasures 'which eye hath not seen nor ear heard,' but which God hath prepared for you, and, I trust, for me!

"At the feet of Jesus I would take up my resting-place, and learn of Him who was 'meek and lowly in heart.' Oh, how I long to have more, much more, of his ever-anxious solicitude and tender concern for souls, and something more like his confidence and love towards a heavenly Father! I see many shortcomings in myself and much remaining worldliness and vanity; but,

"'Grace, 'tis a charming sound,'

'for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God;' but notwithstanding, 'the righteousness of God, by faith of Jesus Christ, is unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference.' 'Thus the righteousness of God without the law is manifested,' since we are 'justified *freely* by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.' It is to this glorious truth I would ever cling in life or in death, for I have thus 'boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.' This same Saviour 'appears now in the presence of God for us,' where

'He ever liveth to make intercession for us.' Would that all we love were safely sheltered beneath the cross! My heart aches when I look around upon most of those whose lot has been cast, like my own, in the army; for, notwithstanding the war which is so close at hand, and in which we shall in all probability be engaged, how little change is visible in their walk and conversation! But in two cases I have great hopes—Capt. —— and one of our young Ensigns—in whose hearts I think the love of Christ finds a response. May they have strength to persevere unto the end!

"Do not make yourself uneasy about the *Simoom*. I came in her from Halifax, and can answer for her tortoise-like sailing qualities! I do not think we are to go to Constantinople, but are to co-operate with the Baltic fleet. If so, I fear I shall never have an opportunity of meeting Captain Astley. Give my love to all. God bless and keep you, my dear friend. —Ever your most affectionate friend and brother,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

TO LADY RAYLEIGH.

"*Windsor, March* 1854.

"EVER DEAREST CLARA,—Many thanks for your dear, interesting letter. How much I should have liked being present at the Meeting, and to have made

acquaintance with Mr Dallas. The Irish Church Missions Society ranks in my mind above any other. God grant it success! I remember it in my prayers every Saturday morning. May a great blessing attend the efforts which are being made to bring the poor benighted people of Ireland from the soul-destroying errors of Popery to the simple 'truth as it is in Jesus!' How plain and easy to be understood is the plan of salvation: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' Jesus Christ is the sinner's prophet, priest, and king, and, thank God, we want no other. I am glad to say the Protestant Reformation Meeting is to come off here next Wednesday. There has been some difficulty about it, and I am quite rejoiced that it has been decided upon at last. But, dearest Clara, whilst I am so opposed to Popery (seeing, as I do, the working of the system in the army), I bear no ill will to Romanists themselves. I should not be a Christian if I did, and I hope that I have no mere party feelings in this matter, but rather that I am led to think as I do from the plain teaching of the Word of God. . . . . Events certainly are hastening rapidly, and the coming of the Son of man may be sooner than any of us expect it. Well, dearest sister, whatever may turn up, I think we can say *nothing* can hurt us. When I look within for proofs of my election and sanctification, I sometimes tremble; but the instant I lift up my eyes to

Him whom God has given to be our righteousness, then my unbelieving fears vanish to the winds. Oh, that we could ever keep Jesus in our hearts and *never* let him go!"

In a letter of the same date to his youngest sister, the following remarkable passage occurs :—

"Be assured you will feel far happier *in this world* even, by making religion your chief business and study, than by all the pleasures and gaieties which your young heart may now probably be longing after. I tell you candidly and seriously that I would willingly part with *every* earthly pleasure *for life*, for *one hour's* communion with Jesus every day."

On the 29th of March he came from Windsor to meet us in London and return with us to Beckenham. On the evening of his arrival, he addressed upwards of a hundred navvies, besides several of the young men of the village, at the reading-rooms. They were crowded to excess, and many more men surrounded the doors. He chose for his subject, "Prepare to meet thy God:" and no man on a dying bed could have spoken with greater solemnity and earnestness. Yet there he stood—a strong young man amidst strong young men, "putting himself alongside of us as a

fellow-sinner," as one of them remarked, "and yet so good now, and such a *man* withal!"

One after another they crowded round him for a shake of his hand, and to wish him safety and success. We heard them saying amongst themselves, "It's a pity such a fine fellow as that should go to be shot;" and several of them met at the further end of the village to make an agreement to pray for him regularly. With two of them the next morning he had private conversation and prayer, at their own request.

On his way to the station, he visited a dying navvy at Sydenham, with whom he prayed. The man said, "He never heard such a prayer; it went straight to his heart."

Whilst waiting for the train, he spoke of "the *comfort* of love between Christian friends," and then added, in a low under-tone, yet slightly hurried, "I have one last favour to ask of you. When I am shot, write to my mother; see her when you can; comfort her as God will teach you."

As soon as I could make any reply, I gave him the promise he required; but added that it seemed to me that so much prayer was made for him, we ought to believe that a special Providence would be extended over him.

He said he did not doubt it. Still his impression was that he should not return. It did not depress him, only gave him a more solemn trust in God, that

He would make the name of the Lord Jesus Christ glorified in him whether by life or by death.

As his regiment was under orders to hold itself in readiness for embarkation at a day's notice, we all thought at the time that this would be his last visit to Beckenham, and "sorrowed most of all for the words which he spake, that we should see his face no more."

"*March* 31.

". . . I have left the quiet peace and heavenly calm of blessed Beckenham, soon, perhaps, to enter upon scenes of angry warfare and strife: but be assured, dearest friends, that you will ever live in my memory, my thoughts, and my prayers; and should it be God's will that we should not see each other here again, we will not sorrow, 'even as others which have no hope, for if we believe' (thank God! we do) 'that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.' Death to the believer is, after all, but an incident in immortality, for Christ says, 'He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life.' How earnestly I thank my heavenly Father for having led me betimes to prepare for that certain eternity beyond the grave! A soldier needs to have Christ in his heart before the hour of battle, although we may hope and believe that to many (like the dying thief) the Sun of Righteousness may arise

'with healing in his wings,' even after the swift bullet has brought the awful message, 'Behold, this night (or this hour) thy soul shall be required of thee.'

"I had such a heavenly joy yesterday and to-day, in conversing with a young bandsman, and a corporal whom I sent for, to my room. I was much struck by an observation from the latter (who, for a time, had fallen away, but is now 'all right,') 'I want more of Jesus *in this life*, Sir, so that when I die I may not be admitted into heaven as a stranger, but be received like a long-lost child would be at his own home.' Surely the Spirit of God is at work in his soul.

"These two men began their Christian course at the same time as myself. I experience fresh delight every time I speak with them of the love of God, of the peace and joy there is in believing. Alas! we understand each other too, when we speak of our weakness, our deadness at times to spiritual perceptions, our cares, and our temptations.

"The Testaments for the men arrived safely. Poor fellows! they were so delighted to get them. I am sure if they knew to whom they were indebted for them, they would desire me to send you their hearty thanks. I greatly like the little 'Soldier's Prayer.' Short, strong, and easy to be understood, it comprehends all that will fit us for heaven. Being a soldier, I take the liberty of using it myself. God grant they

may all offer it from the ground of the heart. I have often heard it said, 'The worse the man, the better the soldier!' Facts contradict this untruth. Were I ever, as leader of a forlorn hope, allowed to select my men, it would be most certainly from among the soldiers of Christ, for who should fight so fearlessly and bravely as those to whom death presents no after terrors? . . . I was surprised to hear of the death of that poor navvy whom we visited; but I will cling with you to the hope that he died a 'pardoned sinner.' He loved prayer; this was not a natural desire, but implanted in his heart by God the Holy Spirit; and we may rest in a good hope that He who 'despiseth not the sighing of a contrite heart,' has been very merciful to him, and that he has gone to swell the number of the ransomed throng; and we shall meet again! The days of our appointed time will ere long have run out, and then *our* change comes. In that, our hour of need, when the heart shall prompt the rising prayer, 'Forsake me not when my strength faileth,' then shall the words of Jesus comfort our departing souls, 'I will *never* leave thee, nor forsake thee.' A near view of Jesus, with those words ringing in our ears, is all we shall want *then*.

"'In thy presence I am happy,
In thy presence I 'm secure;
In thy presence all affliction
I can easily endure.

" ' In thy presence I can conquer,
I can suffer, I can die.
Far from Thee I faint and perish;
O my Saviour, keep me nigh!'

" The little book of Psalms you gave me, I take with me whenever I go out to walk. I have just learned by heart Psalm xci., and it has filled me with confidence in Jesus.

" Remember me most kindly to Gregory, Wood, Wakefield, and Dibley, and all my friends among the navvies. May the Lord give them grace to follow after the things that make for their peace, and to 'fear not the reproach of men, neither to be afraid of their revilings.' I remember them *all* in my prayers. Oh, may they all hold on to the end!* Do tell them that I value their prayers more than I can express, and give them my best wishes for their interests, both temporal and spiritual. I shall probably see them no more on earth, as we are daily expecting our final orders."

But these final orders were not given until seven weeks later, weeks of no common value to those who loved him.

During this period, an interest and a hope which,

* Thomas Dibley, navvy, late of the Army Works' Corps, died of cholera in the Crimea, August 28, 1855. By the grace of God he did "hold on to the end."

for some time past, he had felt it to be his duty to repress, revived with an earnestness and brightness which cast a new colouring over his views of an earthly future, and in a measure effaced the impression that he should not live to return home. Precious as his life had ever been to others, it now became of double value, for it belonged, not to his friends alone,—not to his mother and his family alone,—but to one whose early affection was entirely his, and whose spirit was of kindred quality.

The hope of returning to claim her as his own for ever, was very near his heart, and throughout the long months of his last miserable winter before Sebastopol, had no unimportant influence in keeping his spirit bright and strong. His earthly love was not the less deep and fervent, because it was subordinate to a love yet higher.

As he was quartered, in the months of April and May, at Kensington Barracks, he was able to attend several of the Meetings held by the religious Societies in Exeter Hall. His heart was world-wide, and, as a necessary consequence, it was his earnest desire that the religion which had so expanded his natural powers of loving, and which was the spring of his own joy, should be spread over the earth, by means of Bible and Missionary Associations. To his social nature, also, the meeting with many Christian brothers was a peculiar joy; and at this time he

formed several strong personal friendships, which did not cease when he left the country.

That he won no common love from those who knew him, even slightly, may be gathered from the fact that he was prayed for, by name, at nine weekly prayer-meetings for the army, in England and Scotland, from the day of their commencement to the day of his death.

TO HIS YOUNGEST SISTER.

"I trust you had a happy Easter Sunday. It is the 'day of days,' on which, above all others, we should rejoice and be glad. On this day the Lord of Glory rose from the grave,—He who was crowned with thorns, and nailed to the fearful cross,—Jesus, the suffering, dying Lamb of God. His agonies are ended,—He is risen, He is risen! Think not then of your past sins, except that you may love Christ more for having forgiven you so much. They are all buried in His sepulchre; that streaming blood proclaims your soul's redemption.

"'The happy morn is come,
Triumphant o'er the grave;
The Saviour leaves the tomb,
Omnipotent to save.

"'Christ has the ransom paid;
The glorious work is done;
On Him our help is laid,
By Him our victory won.

" ' Who now accuses them
For whom their Surety died?
Who now shall those condemn
Whom God hath justified?'

" Believe in this power of Jesus to save and help you. Dwell much in your thoughts upon His character. You must seek for Him as for hid treasure, and remember His words, ' Those that seek me early shall find me.'

" I want you, my darling Georgie, to give up your heart entirely to Christ Jesus your Redeemer. His love is beyond the power of words to express, and he is willing to pardon abundantly. We need, indeed, many gifts and graces before we shall be perfect in Christ Jesus, but, as St Paul says, ' My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.' It is of no use to complain of our wants, unless we go to have them supplied, and we should not only pray to be delivered from the temporal and eternal consequences of sin, but for power to burst asunder each remaining link of its fetters; for strength to fight against pride, vanity, anger, self-righteousness, and everything which we know to be contrary to the will of our blessed Redeemer; and, O dearest sister! may we both grow daily in love and joy and peace, in tenderness of conscience and purity of heart."

TO MRS OVENS.

"My very dear Friend,—God bless you for that kind and cheering letter, and also for your prayers, which I value more than I can express. As but a poor return, whilst I live, you shall have mine. May your heart, dear friend, be ever warmed and gladdened by the bright sunshine of a Saviour's presence. *You* know (and every believer in Christ can testify to it) that there is *no delight* in this world equal to that which is felt when the Saviour is *near*. Surely we have both great cause to

"'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,'

for his distinguishing love and mercy in singling us out, and condescending to dwell in our hearts, whilst so many who are no greater sinners than we are 'are living without God in the world.'

"'Grace, 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear.'

"God grant that both our hearts may be *filled* with Christ, and whilst 'with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,' may we 'be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' 'Looking unto Jesus' is, after all, the grand secret for keeping alive

a love for holiness in the heart, and a longing for a more constant and close communion with our Heavenly Father.

"I returned from a short visit to Dr Marsh last Thursday; truly that place is 'a little heaven below.' I enjoyed the short time I spent there very much, and was greatly refreshed by the many proofs I observed of real conversion to God from among the poor navvies employed in the Crystal Palace. What encouragement for us, dear friend, to be also zealous and active in the cause of our blessed Redeemer! One of the army missionaries employed by the 'Soldiers' Friend Society,' called upon me last Monday with several Testaments (the men cannot take Bibles in their knapsacks) for the soldiers of the 97th Regiment. Would you mind asking your husband to make it known among his Christian friends that there is such a Society? The men are very grateful for the great interest which is being taken in their eternal welfare. Who can say but that many a poor fellow, even after the whistling bullet has brought the summons, 'Prepare to meet thy God,' may be brought to 'look unto Jesus,' and thus be saved by a message of peace given him through those Testaments? There is yet nothing known positively about the movements of my regiment, but it is said that we are soon to move to the Tower prior to our departure for the seat of war. I was much cheered the day before yesterday by a

conversation which I had with two soldiers of the 97th, who began to follow the Lord Jesus about the same time as I did; they are both, thank God, walking in his ways, and, like good soldiers of Christ, are fighting the Lord's battles against all *his* foes. I trust, dear friend, that when I return (if I ever *do* return), I may have an opportunity of paying you a visit. I am sure nothing would give me greater pleasure. Remember me most kindly to your husband, and believe me ever

"Your grateful and sincere friend,

"Hedley Vicars."

One day, when we were in London, I happened to meet him, when on my way to an hospital to see a sick navvy, whom I had known in Beckenham. He requested permission to go also. I hesitated, on finding that there were fever cases in the ward for which I was bound; he was amused at my fears for him, saying, that in old times he had spent many hours of the day by the side of yellow fever patients, at their quarters in the West Indies, reading novels to them; "So now, you need not fear for me if I read the Bible to your mild fever cases in England!"

From that time, he regularly visited that poor man twice a-week, although the hospital was six miles

distant from Kensington Barracks; and even in the hurry of his last day in England, found time to bid him farewell.

During each of his succeeding visits to Beckenham, he addressed the poor in one cottage or another, in different parts of the village. At a carpenter's cottage, in an adjoining hamlet, where he spoke with reference to the fast for the army, which had been kept throughout the country the day before, he was constantly prayed for, from that time until its owners heard of his death.

A large number of young men, chiefly navvies, were present that evening, and, at our request, he told them the story of his conversion. To illustrate the recklessness of his life before that great change took place, he mentioned, amongst other acts of useless and even sinful daring, that when he was in the West Indies, at the time the cholera was raging, he and one brother officer determined to punish another for being afraid of it.

"Let us put him into a coffin!" said Hedley. No sooner spoken than acted upon. A row of coffins stood at the hospital door. Undeterred from their reckless purpose, by finding one after another filled by a silent occupant, they at last succeeded in their object.

The companion of Hedley Vicars in this sinful practical joke was seized with cholera shortly after-

wards; but by God's forbearing mercy, *he* was spared for better things.

At the close of his address, he turned round, and said to me, with characteristic frank simplicity, "I am sorry you asked me to speak of myself; one is afraid of being proud even in speaking of one's sins!"

The following letter is in allusion to this:—

"DEAREST FRIEND,—I cannot tell you how *lonely* I always feel when, after having enjoyed your society (even if only for a few hours) I have once more returned to the routine of a soldier's life. But do not suppose, because I say this, or from anything I have lately said, that I am beginning to 'shew the white feather,' and that, finding a soldier's cross too irksome, I would change it for one less weighty. *Never!* The Lord God has called me to eternal life in the army, and *as a soldier I will die.* Had I loved Jesus when I was seventeen, or rather had the love of Jesus been then made known to my soul, I *certainly* should not have been a soldier; but as it is, death alone shall ever make me leave my colours. Did our God and King, Jesus himself, the 'great Captain of our salvation,' spare no toil, fatigue, anguish, or bodily suffering even unto death, to obtain forgiveness of our sins? And shall not we, towards whom this infinite love and compassion have been shewn, be constrained to

do *something* for Jesus in return, nor care if our path of duty should prove a rough and thorny one; for he cleared a way through the briars *first*, and we but follow in the Saviour's footsteps?

"I confess that at times Satan has puffed me up, and made me think more highly of myself than I ought to think; but I *hate and detest* this sin, and for many months I think the Lord has given me grace to fight against it effectually. But I must be watchful. How pleasant, is it not, after having been engaged at the work of heart-examination, to pause and behold the Lamb of God? I thank God that I can trace so distinctly His finger in my soul's conversion, and that it has been begun and is carried on entirely by Him alone. 'By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.' 'WORTHY IS THE LAMB that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!'

"In reading again the account of our Saviour's resurrection, I could not help pausing to meditate on those blessed words, 'I ascend to *my* Father and *your* Father.' Is it not delightful when we can (even only for a while) fully realise that we are thus closely united to God through Jesus Christ; and is it not a wonderful thought, in grandeur far exceeding the highest conception of the human mind, that we, al-

though mere creatures of the clay, are yet immortal, God-related beings, elected, destined to enjoy a glorious, never-ending eternity with Jehovah Jesus, our Father and Elder Brother? Then shall these dark tombs of hearts be made so pure and white that even the breath of sin can never come near to defile them; and now we see through a glass darkly, then shall we 'know even as we are known.'

"I often grieve when at night I look back on the many precious hours of the day *lost*, given me for the purpose of making a *closer* acquaintance with Jesus; and I suppose the greater happiness we find in Him here, the greater will be our enjoyment of Him hereafter. It is only adding sorrow to grief to know as we do that Christ yearns for our love, and that it pains His human nature when forgotten by us, for whom He has done such great things; but I do desire to be always in Christ, and He in me; and I think in His mercy God is leading my heart to seek more earnestly 'the unsearchable riches of Christ;' and yet there is still the remains of the old leaven working in my heart, and it is only the grace of God that restrains me. But how comforting the assurance that He will carry on His 'labour of love' in our souls, that He does not leave the issue in the least doubtful; for His having come to us and made His abode with us, filling our hearts with peace and joy in believing, and causing them to 'abound with hope through

the power of the Holy Ghost,' is a proof that we shall persevere unto the end, and leads us to believe that (notwithstanding our frail natures) we shall *never* perish, but, being sealed with the 'Spirit of promise,' be kept through faith unto salvation, and preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"I must not forget, dearest friend, to explain what I meant when I said that 'a sort of pride is apt to rise up in speaking even of our sins.' It is a fact, that when I have spoken of my life (at least, the greater part of it) to those who were then living in the indulgence of these very sins (once the inmates of my heart, I have had such thoughts as these put into my mind (and it has more than once made me doubt my sincerity in referring to myself):—'Oh, yes, if you let them know that you were once like themselves, they will think the better of you for having led what they would call a bold, fearless, dashing life; they will admire your excessive humility, think you an extraordinary character!' and so on. It is positively sickening to know that I have ever been guilty of such vile thoughts. But there is, thank God! a fountain ever open in which to wash and be clean.

"'When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And *pour contempt* on all my pride.'

"It *should ever* be deeply humbling to the believer to make known a career of sin, although past, gone, and washed out for ever in the blood of the Lamb."

"*Kensington, May* 3, 1854.

"I am going to Richmond to see my dear uncle this morning, so I have only just time to write a few lines. I have made it a rule never to read any letters before prayer, and until I have read and meditated on my morning portion of God's Word; but I was strongly tempted to break my resolution when your letter was put into my hand this morning, and I can assure you it required no small self-denial and stern resistance to *wishes* to put it aside till I had offered up my early sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving. To tell you the truth, your letters have often made me break through this very rule, although I shall not, I hope, do so again, for I never *enjoy* any day that has not been commenced *alone with God.* I went to see your navvy at the hospital on Saturday afternoon, before I received your letter. I read a chapter, and had a pleasant chat with him for more than half an hour. He is, I think, rather weaker and thinner than when you saw him, but I believe his soul is prospering, thank God! He spoke most gratefully of you. I shall go and see him again soon.

"I also had a long conversation with another poor

fellow. I found that he had been a boatswain in the navy for many years. He thanked me most heartily for having spoken to him as I wished him good-bye.

"I had intended talking to some of the other men, but an old woman came up in a threatening attitude, and told me 'time was up;' so I was obliged to retire.

"I have just returned from Simms's, where I had my likeness taken. I think there are two for you to choose from, both as plain as life. I brought my great Halifax Bible to have its portrait taken, as you desired.

"Dr Cay came to my room again yesterday, and we read together 2 Cor. v. I find it a great comfort to see and talk with such a dear child of God; and yet Jesus has often been more precious when, for days and weeks, I have not had *one* to speak to who could feel with me on the subject of religion, than when I have been thus blessed."

On the 6th of May he went down to Terling, to stand godfather to his sister's infant son. The impression left on the minds of all his family by this visit, which *he* knew to be his last before leaving England, was that of increased earnestness, amounting to solemnity. Twice, at Lord Rayleigh's request, he led the devotions at family prayers; and those

who heard him, bore away a conviction of his meetness for that state of which he spoke with holy longing—"absent from the body, *present with the Lord.*" His subject on the first day was 2 Cor. v., on the last, Rev. xxii.

With his mother and sisters he held unreserved communion on the things which belonged to their peace. His second sister remembers that, when pressing the duty of reading the Word of God with prayer before the work of the day began, he mentioned that, whilst visiting his valued friends Mr and Mrs Round, of Birch Hall, Essex, he had slept one morning later than usual, and had gone down to family prayers without having had time for his private devotions. "My soul was the worse for it," he said, "for nearly three weeks afterwards."

Affectionate as he had ever been, there was, during this last visit, a depth of quiet tenderness about him which, they now feel, was a mute prophecy that this was his last welcome home.

Very early in the morning of the day he left for London, he and his mother met for prayer. He knelt long by her side, pouring out his heart in pleading with God for her, that grace and strength might be given for every hour of need. Strengthened in spirit by that prayer, she was able, with his sisters, to accompany him as far as the station. The remembrance of his last embrace, his last look, his last blessing,

enriches their hearts still, and makes the place of their parting seem almost holy ground.

A few days before the Light Company of the 97th left Kensington Barracks for their embarkation, I had an opportunity of conversing with some of the men. They spoke with great respect and affection of their favourite officer. One of them, named Reynolds, said, "Since Mr Vicars became so good, he has steadied about four hundred men in the regiment."

"Four hundred!" was repeated with surprise.

"I don't mean that he has made all the four hundred as good as himself. That he couldn't. I know enough of religion to know that God alone could do that. But while he was Adjutant—and since, too—he has sobered and steadied nigh four hundred of the drunkenmost and wildest men in the regiment. There isn't a better officer nor a better man in the Queen's service."

Within a few days of the departure of the 97th, he received an earnest request from those Crystal Palace workmen whom he had addressed at Beckenham from time to time, that he would give them a few farewell words. We were all absent from home at the time, but a variety of details of the evening reached us in the graphic letters of these poor fellows. One of those letters will suffice here:—

Deptford, May 11, 1854.

"DEAR LADY,—Last night I went to hear that blessed soldier and minister of Christ, Mr Vicars, addressing the people of Beckenham, and I believe he was much admired by all his hearers; for my part, I never heard a man speak more like a humble, true follower of Christ than he did. But surely (as the words he dwelt much upon say) the love of Christ constraineth him. Oh, that all our soldiers and sailors were as he is! Then our land would bring forth her increase, and God, even our own God, would give us his blessing; and God would go before us and fight our battles. But, alas! alas! we follow too much our own ways, and do things we ought not, and leave undone what we should do. Sometimes I think myself that I will try hard to live nearer to God, but perhaps before an hour is gone over, wicked thoughts cross my mind, and thus I sin against God. I feel my desires for good were strengthened last night, and I am right glad I went. I had a great desire to speak to him afterward, but there was so many people round him, and I thought he had stopped as long as he could convenient. I ran all the way after the carriage. My hope was to see him at the station, but I was not in time to see which carriage he got into in the dark; so I did not see him; but I pray God he may ever be kept in Christ,

and, if it be God's will, return to his native land from this dreadful war in peace. If I knew where to find him at Kensington, I would go up to see him again.

"From your humble, grateful servant, and son in Jesus Christ,

"WILLIAM GREGORY."

Hedley Vicars himself wrote of this evening's work to his sister:—

TO MISS VICARS.

"*Kensington, Monday.*

"EVER DEAREST MARY,—Although I am much engaged in various ways, I must find time to write a few lines to you. I must begin by giving you an account of my visit to Beckenham. I had a most happy meeting there last Wednesday. As the Rectory was deserted, being under repair, Mrs Miller kindly asked me to have tea at her house. She used to know dearest mother and Uncle Edward very well.

"At eight o'clock I started for the Reading-rooms, and found them filled. We began by singing that beautiful hymn, 'When I survey the wondrous cross,' and then I spoke to them, as well as I could, on those solemn words, 'We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ,' and 'The love of Christ

constraineth us.' God enable me to speak very freely—more so than I ever remember before—and my heart was much drawn out in love for their souls. I spoke for nearly an hour, and then prayed with them. They appeared to take a deep interest in what was said, and they took a most affectionate farewell of me.

"I went on Thursday evening to a meeting of the Ragged Church and Chapel Union, Lord Shaftesbury in the chair, where I met Mr Blake, who shewed me Clara's letter about the additional Testaments she is going to give to the men of the 97th. At the London Bridge Station I met William Gregory, one of Miss M——'s navvies, and we had a long talk, walking up and down, for a full hour.

"I went yesterday to hear Mr Cadman preach at St George's Church, Southwark. I set off early to walk there, and arrived half an hour before the service began. So, having a little time to spare, I spent it in conversing with a cabman, I hope profitably. I heard a capital sermon from Mr Cadman. He is an earnest, faithful preacher of Christ. He had invited me to luncheon at his house, and afterwards I went out with him to see the ragged schools, six in number. He seems almost weighed down under a sense of the great responsibility of his cure. His parish numbers 40,000 souls, mostly of the lowest poor. I said to him, 'You need, Sir, often to have near and

precious views of Jesus in your own soul to keep your spirit from desponding and your faith strong.' He said, 'Yes, it is only the thought of Him that supports us in our work; otherwise it would at times be overwhelming.' At parting he warmly commended me to the grace of God. Would, dearest Mary, that both of us had the deep, unfeigned humility of this good man!

"In the evening I went to Park Chapel to hear Mr Goodhart, of whose preaching Miss M—— spoke in such very high terms. I found a nice walk through a shaded lane towards Chelsea. On emerging into the road, I saw an old woman dressed in black, and asked her the way to Park Chapel. She said, 'Oh, Sir, I am going there; will you come with me? or, as I shall walk too slow for you, I will tell you the way.' I told her I would prefer accompanying her. We began talking together. She was loud in her praises of Mr Goodhart, and said, 'Woe be to the man who sits under his preaching without being changed.' I mentioned another excellent man. She instantly said, 'Yes, he is a very good man, but he cannot hold a candle to this dear child of God.' When we arrived at the chapel she made me come into her pew. The chapel was quite full, and I never heard a more beautiful, powerful sermon in all my life—pure Gospel from beginning to end. I was rather amused several times by my old friend's saying,

'Ah, did you ever hear anything like *that* before?' 'What do you think of that?' After the service, I told her I should like to say a few words to him about the meeting of the Soldier's Friend Society. She said, 'You shall see him; he is such a nice man to talk to,' and shewed me the way to the vestry. I hesitated to go in, but she threw open the door and made me go in. I introduced myself to Mr Goodhart, and he welcomed me most kindly. I found out what I wished to know about the Meeting, and wished him good-night. I never saw the old woman in black again.

"I must conclude, as I have much to do. I have to go and see about my married soldiers' children. Warm love to all. Kiss my godchild for me. May the Lord Jesus be with you, and the Holy Spirit be poured upon you!

"Ever, dearest Mary,
"Your devotedly attached brother,
"HEDLEY VICARS."

On the evening of Wednesday the 17th, he attended the first public Meeting in Exeter Hall, for the Soldiers' Friend Society, in which he was warmly interested. Some of his men were also present.

He found time for the service of God, and for promoting the interests of His kingdom upon earth,

without neglecting any of the last obligations of friendship before his final parting, and whilst occupied, almost from morning till night, in arranging and providing for the wives and children of the soldiers of the Light Company.

The order had come for the embarkation of his regiment on Friday in that week. The fulfilment of an old promise was now claimed by him, that we should meet him at Waterloo Station, and cheer him with a last "God bless you!" there.

But, on Thursday afternoon, he sent a note by express, to say that they had just received orders to leave London at six o'clock; and that much as he had rested on the promise of this last act of friendship in England, he could not request its fulfilment, as the hour was so early.

It need not be said, that the hour was of no moment to those who loved him. By six o'clock we drove up to the Waterloo Station.

It was a lovely morning, that 19th of May. The sunshine, glittering on the bayonets of the men, as they marched up the steps to the station, seemed to mock the tears of wives, sisters, and friends, who accompanied them.

I saw a young wife quit her hold of her husband's hand, and approach Hedley Vicars, with a manner of respectful confidence, as she said to him, "Oh, Mr Vicars, *you* will see that Cottrell writes to me *regular*,

won't you? It is my only comfort to know that you will."

The kindness and sympathy of his tone, as he answered her, told that her confidence was not misplaced.

Just then, his brother arrived; and during the delay which followed before the train started, we read the 121st Psalm in the waiting-room. I remember the deep well of quiet confidence in his eye, as the words were repeated to him, "The Lord is *thy* keeper."

There was something in the tone of his voice that day which struck like a distant knell upon our hearts. It was a foreboding tone. However strongly hope may have sprung up afterwards, we felt at that moment that it was our last parting.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Hospital.

"And the KING shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto ME."

THE path of Hedley Vicars for nearly three years past had been as a shining light in the eyes of all who watched it. But during his last year upon earth it shone "more and more unto the perfect day."

Doubtless, for a heart at once so tender in its own feelings, and so intent on sustaining the spirits of others, there was a discipline of no light character in the partings he had just gone through, with a presage that they were final; and, although the hopes of young, high-hearted manhood rose at times above that solemn foreboding, it ran like an under-current through the remainder of his course, and deepened his earnestness in pressing after the prize set before him.

Before the *Orinoco* sailed from the shores of England, he found time to pour fourth the overflowings of his full heart in the following letters to his mother, and to one of the friends with whom he had last parted:—

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*On board the Orinoco, May* 19, 1854.

". . . . I feel grateful to God for having given me so many kind Christian friends, but far above all for having given me such a mother, whose prayers I believe God has answered in leading me for shelter and refuge to the cross of Christ. Do not, I beseech you, dearest mother, be the least anxious about me. I am in God's hands, therefore fear not for me. Nothing could make my hands stronger than knowing that your mind is at peace and quiet. We know that all things work together for our good, that Jesus loves us with an everlasting love, and that it is not only in health that He is with us, but when we come to die He will 'comfort' us, and bear us safely through the valley of the shadow of death."

"*On board the Orinoco, May* 19.

". . . . Here we are, thank God, safe and sound! We expect the head-quarters from Windsor at twelve o'clock to-morrow, but it is doubtful whether we sail on Saturday evening or Sunday morning. And now, thank you from my innermost soul for your precious letter. I could say but little this morning, and I feel now that I cannot half

express my intense gratitude for all your many acts of true-hearted friendship. How very, very kind of you to drive so far to wish me a last farewell! God bless you, dearest friend, for this crowning proof of your affection, and reward you a thousandfold for all you have done for me and mine! I left you with a heavy heart this morning, and was thankful to find myself in a carriage, alone; that I might give way to a weakness which I would not confess to any one else. It was a relief to my full heart; and even a soldier may be allowed a few tears at parting. Your letter refreshed and comforted me very much. I read it over and over again. I feel grateful to you for the interest you have taken in poor Cottrell's wife. I have desired him to write to her. Thank dearest —— from me for every kind word she spoke to soothe the sorrowing heart of that poor woman. Tell her that this morning, in my cabin, alone, I poured out my soul in prayer for her. . . . . In this world we must expect trials and sorrows; indeed, I think we should soon cease to feel our constant need of Jesus, if it were not so, and willingly, yes, joyfully, do I hail any cross that weans me more from the world and leads me closer to Him.

"Excuse this hasty letter. I have everything to do on board, as the rest are on shore. I will write as often as I can, if not oftener! . . . Jesus has given me a strong desire to devote my remaining days to

His blessed service; and O, Heavenly Father, grant me thy Divine grace and mighty help, that I may never bring dishonour on the sacred name of Christ! I often fear lest anything I say or do should have this effect. Oh, for a single eye to the glory of Jesus, that every act might spring from the motive of pure and unfeigned love to Him! But beneath the cross we are, thank God, safe and secure. He will carry on the work He alone has begun in our hearts, even until the day of Jesus Christ. God bless you all, exceeding abundantly above all I can ask or think!

"*On board the Orinoco, Mediterranean, May* 31.

". . . . The day we left the Bay of Gibraltar the secret of our destination was divulged. We are to form part of an Anglo-French force in Greece, for the purpose of bringing King Otho to his senses. It is thought very probable that we shall eventually be sent on to Turkey, but it will be some months, at any rate, before this most desirable event can take place. Still I feel assured that everything is ordered by a wise and gracious Providence, and, therefore, it must be for the best, however disappointing it may appear.

"We have had rather rough weather since we left England, but the last two or three days have been delightful. There are many drawbacks on board

ship, in a religious point of view, but I have had glimpses of Jesus, and found Him to be very precious to my soul. I have established a Bible-reading class, which numbered six last Sunday—as many as the cabin could contain! With several of my brother officers I have had most interesting conversations, and with some to whom I never spoke on religious subjects before: and I believe that in many a heart there is implanted a desire for that which the world cannot give. Some of them will not only listen attentively to what refers to their eternal welfare, but seem most anxious to renew the subject. God grant that this time of trouble and excitement may be made the means of awakening careless hearts, and leading them to Christ.

"*June* 1.—We are now in Malta Harbour, and expect to leave for the Piræus in an hour's time. A French frigate passed us this morning, the men turned up and cheered her most heartily, to which the Frenchmen responded as cordially.

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Pirœus, June* 3, 1854.

"EVER DEAREST MOTHER,—By God's mercy we have at length reached our destination. The *Orinoco* let go her anchor about three o'clock this afternoon. I got up very early this morning, and went

on deck. On either side of us was high, rocky land, and here and there were several islands, barren and uncultivated. We steamed past Athens; it is situated on the slope of a hill, with high mountains stretching away on both sides. As we kept out a considerable distance from land we could not distinguish much. In an hour we entered the harbour of the Piræus, and here the scene that presented itself was very novel. We had scarcely anchored, when the rigging of the *Leander*, a British frigate, was swarming with her crew, who welcomed us with loud hurrahs; answering cheers pealed from a thousand throats, and scarcely had they died away, when the band of the French flag-ship, the *Gomer*, struck up 'God save the Queen,' and the men clustered like bees in the rigging, waving their straw caps, and cheering most heartily. *Vive l'Empereur*, sounding plain and distinct from the quarter-deck of the *Orinoco*, was the signal for renewed and long-continued cheering. Hardly had they ceased, when all else was drowned in the thundering of the saluting cannon. . . . . The Piræus is surrounded by hills, the slopes of which are thickly studded with the tents of the French; indeed they appear to be everywhere. They have a guard at the entrance of the harbour, and several outposts in the town. . . . . I thank God that, notwithstanding many obstacles in various ways, He has given me the power to keep near to Jesus;

indeed, I feel more than ever the comfort of religion. Pray for me, dearest mother, that I may be kept faithful unto the end. This is indeed a poor world without Christ. God bless you, dearest, best of mothers, and may you be 'filled with the Holy Ghost!'"

TO MISS VICARS.

"*Magazine Guard, Piræus, June* 22.

"My darling Mary,—Being on guard to-day, I take the opportunity of writing to you, as here I have both a table and chair, and my tent can boast of neither. The heat is excessive, the thermometer being 100° in the shade. You have no idea what lassitude and disinclination for exertion creep over one; but I fight against it as well as I can. I have not yet seen Athens by day; but on the 13th, I started about sunset with a young brother officer, to have a moonlight view of the Acropolis. After a dusty walk of six miles, we reached the famous city. We walked about the streets for upwards of an hour, and met several Greek soldiers armed with firelock and sword, some of whom looked rather savagely at us. Not knowing our way up to the ruins of the Acropolis, we should have had some difficulty in finding it, when luckily we met a Greek, to whom we had given a free passage from Malta, and who spoke English tolerably well. He shewed us the way up the mountain. When we reached its summit, we passed through a

low archway which led to a small wicket gate, barred and locked. On knocking, we were roughly challenged by a sentry, whom we had evidently aroused from his peaceful slumbers! When our guide explained that we were English officers, the door was quickly opened. We went up several marble steps, and found ourselves in the venerable ruins of the Acropolis. I never saw so magnificent a sight. The full moon was shining in pale splendour; high massive columns, in good preservation, stood out in bold relief; whilst others, shattered by the Turkish cannon, during the last war, or mouldering from age, scarcely reared their heads above the marble pavement. But such a scene loses by description. I had brought my Testament, in the hope that we could read a quiet chapter together, on the spot where Paul once preached 'Jesus Christ, and Him crucified;' but the chattering guide and inquisitive guard who accompanied us, prevented our having this pleasure. From an old embrasure, about two hundred feet above the town, we had a beautiful view of Athens. I could have remained there for hours. Oh, how I wish you could have been with us!

"I enjoyed so much my first walk to Athens, that the next night I went there again, with another officer, and read Acts xvii., on 'Mars' Hill,' by moonlight. We did not reach the Piræus till half-past two in the morning! While we were away, the Camp had a

false alarm. One of the sentries observed what he thought to be a large body of armed men approaching; and, giving the alarm, the men were quickly out of the tents, and, amidst great confusion, began loading their muskets, &c. After they had formed in column,—the French on each side being also under arms,—a party was sent to reconnoitre, when the enemy was discovered to be a large drove of oxen, with their drivers!

"We expect to move into barracks in a day or two, which will be much more pleasant.

"Dearest Mary, how it increases my love for you to know that you are seeking after the same Saviour, that you are following after Jesus.

"'Oh, may we ever walk in Him,
And nothing know beside,
Nothing desire, nothing esteem,
But Jesus crucified.'

"A few of us have met together on different occasions in one of the tents, and twice under the rocks, for reading the Scriptures; but when we get into barracks, I hope we shall be able to have a regular meeting every day, as we did on board the *Orinoco*. One or two of those who are entering on the Christian course have much to encounter in the way of ridicule, but God will give them strength and courage.

"I have nothing to put up with in this way now; the worst, by far the worst, of all my real enemies, I

find to be my own evil heart; and it is in conquering and overcoming this, that the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit are shewn in all their magnitude and restraining force.

"Best love to you all, and to the chicks. My love to dear Miss Strutt. God bless you all. May we be kept close to Jesus.

"Ever, dearest Mary, your most deeply attached and affectionate brother,

"HEDLEY."

"*Piræus, July* 2, 1854.

"Heaven's blessings upon you, dearest friend, for your precious letters. I cannot tell you with what delight I hailed your handwriting. Immediately I sallied forth to my cave under the rocks, where I had the rich enjoyment of reading them undisturbed. How I long with you, to have my heart more entirely given up to my blessed Saviour, to have every thought brought into obedience to Him, and that the fruits of the Holy Spirit may prove the reality of my faith, making me more humble, more holy, more heavenly-minded! Often do I fear, lest by word or deed I should bring dishonour on the name of Him we love; but yet I feel a quiet confidence that He will keep me by his grace and power, and enable me to persevere to the end. There is indeed great peace in simply believing, living upon Jesus. What peaceful, happy

hours are those when Christ is the sole meditation of the heart; and even when earthly thoughts intrude, or darkness fills the soul for a time, how sweet to recollect that 'He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust!'"

"*Piræus, July* 11.

"How I bless God for his tender love and mercy in restoring your beloved sister. I speak but the truth of my heart, when I say that in all your sorrow I suffer, and in all your comfort I am comforted.

"I had very strong faith that God would spare her precious life, and restore her to health. May every answer to our prayers make us, in dependance upon Christ, wrestle the more earnestly in every fresh petition, especially for heavenly blessings upon our souls. So shall we have power with God, and shall prevail. I have heard prayer ridiculed, and insinuations thrown out that only men of weak minds ever pray. Little do those who thus speak know the real delight of prayer, nor the deep joy when the answer comes.

"'What various hindrances we meet,
In coming to a mercy-seat!
Yet who that knows the worth of prayer,
But wishes to be often there?'

"But what a thought to fill our minds, when we approach a throne of grace,—that Jesus is pleading for us, and that *our* prayers are *His*.

"I greatly like the passage from Captain A.'s letter, and rejoice in the hope that he has chosen Christ Jesus for his portion, or rather that Jesus has chosen him 'before the foundation of the world,' and written his name 'in the Book of Life.' Tell him, in seeking and following Jesus, he *will* find peace and rest to his soul. A hard struggle it will be at first; but ere long he will find his Saviour's words to be true, 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

" . . . . Often do I join you in spirit at your cottage readings and sacred prayer meetings. What happy hours are those when, shut out from all that makes the world unlovely, we can enjoy uninterrupted communion with the Lord's people! It is so refreshing to know and feel that Jesus is precious to *other* souls. The Christian does not want a monopoly of that love. There is enough and to spare for all. Oh, that my comrades would be wise; that they would taste and see, ere they talk lightly of the love of Christ, or rob Him of the glory of their souls' redemption, purchased by the atoning blood of his Cross! Would that, not only they, but every living man, drawn by redeeming love, would let the Redeemer 'see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied!'

"We generally get a few together for Bible reading in the afternoon. Nares has been ill; I have had

many a delightful talk with him on subjects that used to be of little interest to either of us.

"I saw a Greek funeral the other day; it was a horrid sight. The corpse, dressed like a bride, with trinkets and ornaments, and a wreath of flowers round the head, was carried through the streets in an open coffin. Three or four fat, dirty-looking priests, holding large crosses, led the procession, without even a mock air of grief, but looking rather jolly than otherwise.

"I must now conclude, for it is just midnight. You can have no idea how the musquitoes have been biting me under the table, ever since I began writing. Macgregor paid me a visit to-day: he is quite a young fellow; I like him very much; we have had many conversations together: he is another proof of the untold blessing of having a pious mother, and a pious father too. . . .

"Give my love to that dear old Christian, Mrs Kipping, and thank her for her prayers. Tell me how poor Mr B. is? I shall never forget his telling me one day, with tears in his eyes, 'I *cannot* believe! I *want* to believe!' I have often prayed for him since." . . .

TO DR TWINING.

"*Piræus, Greece, July* 19, 1854.

". . . I thank you from my innermost soul,

dearest friend, for the comfort and peace I now enjoy: for leading me (as the instrument in God's hands) to Jesus. And now, having tasted that the Lord is gracious,—having known somewhat of the love of Christ, I would endeavour to win my fellow-sinners to Him—from vanity to real enjoyment.

"Jesus is very precious to my soul,—my All in all. Often have I been on the point of falling away, and yet His arm has held me up, and kept me from bringing dishonour on His blessed name. To Him be *all* the praise and glory!

"Seasons of despondency and gloom I have had, but my consolations have abounded also, and I trust that I am seeking for more conformity to Jesus in my life and conversation, through the mighty help of His ever-blessed Spirit. But with St Paul, often in the agony of my soul am I forced to cry out, 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Yet with whom also I can say, 'I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' . . .

"We are quartered here with the French, who have upwards of 4000 men. They are in tents; we are now in barracks. The weather is very hot, and the climate bad. We are now in quarantine, as the cholera has broken out amongst the French. They have lost two officers and one hundred men. We have not lost a man; but it is a solemn time, and

loudly calls upon each of us, 'Prepare to meet thy God.'

"I feel very much being debarred from the means of grace and from the communion of the Lord's people; but Jesus more than makes up for every loss. There have been happy moments, when He has been *very near*, and when I felt that I should wish to depart and be with Him."

To the same beloved and honoured friend (of whom, with every member of his family, Hedley Vicars ever retained the most affectionate remembrance) he had previously addressed these words, which forcibly expressed the deliberate choice of his soul:—

"I would not, for all the world could give me, go back to my former state. I have gained immeasurably more than I have given. In exchange for fleeting pleasures now, I have hopes of lasting joys, which mortal eye hath never seen, nor ear heard of, nor heart can conceive. I have been brought into friendship with God, through the merits and precious blood-shedding of my Redeemer and the influence of the Holy Ghost. And in place of an aching heart, I have tasted of a peace which passeth understanding."

Hedley Vicars was now to enter on the most solemn

period of his life. To those who watch the guidings of the Divine hand, it will be scarcely necessary to point out the wisdom of that Providence which led him to Greece, and kept him there throughout the awful prevalence of the cholera and malignant fever, —a visitation which, within the space of thirty-four days, deprived his regiment of one hundred and twenty of its ablest and finest men.

As no spiritual instruction was provided for either Protestant or Roman Catholic soldiers, the field was his own. He began his work by undertaking the command of funeral parties for other officers, who gladly relinquished to him a task so little congenial to their feelings. In this way he obtained frequent opportunities of addressing the living around the graves of the dead, warning them to flee from the wrath to come, and beseeching them to close at once with offers of free pardon and mercy from that Divine Redeemer who is "the life of them that believe, and the resurrection of the dead."

On the first of these solemn occasions his heart was too full for words, yet the tears which stifled his voice had an eloquence of their own for the brave men around him. They reckoned not the less confidently on his dauntless courage in every hour of danger.

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

The solemn and tender tone of his own feelings com-

municated itself to them, and thus were their hearts opened to receive the message he so longed to deliver.

It was "the love of Christ constraining" him, and no mere sense of duty, which led Hedley Vicars to spend the greater part of his days, and often of his nights, in the pestilential air of the crowded hospitals—

> "Seeking, as men seek for riches,
> Painful vigils by the bed
> Where the sick and dying stretches
> Aching limbs beside the dead."

Dearer than life to him was the hope of persuading the dying to look to Jesus, remembering the breadth of the promise, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, *all* ye ends of the earth." And doubly did he prize the opportunity, when the lighting up of a dying eye at the name of Jesus assured him that he was ministering to one of the brethren of his Lord, for he was not unmindful of the words, "I was sick, and ye visited ME."

Whilst thus intently occupied in promoting the spiritual welfare of the men of his regiment, he was no less keenly alive to the best interests of his brother officers. Although open opposition on the part of those who differed from him in religious opinion had long ceased, he did not know until now how firm was his hold on their feelings and confidence. When laid

aside by illness, they all welcomed his visits, and generally asked him to repeat them. The reality of his religion was now proved beyond all question. It had been weighed in the balances with mere worldly motives of action, and had not been found wanting. Confidence could no longer be withheld from principles which had subdued to thoughtful tenderness for the souls of those around, a spirit amongst the most buoyant and dauntless of them all.

"I have been thinking over the time we spent at the Piræus," writes a young brother officer, in whom Hedley Vicars was warmly interested, "and will tell you of anything which strikes me. I was constantly with Vicars there, and know what his daily life was better, perhaps, than any one else. But about that, it is difficult to say more, than that he never for a moment seemed to forget 'whose he was.' When we were in camp, on first landing, he was in the habit of going out alone for hours amongst the rocks on the sea-shore, having only his Bible, which, I remember his telling me, Dr Marsh called 'his *sword*.'

"As you know, of course, there was no chaplain for the English troops there. The Chaplain attached to the English Legation at Athens came over to the Piræus at first to perform a short service in one of the barrack rooms, but as soon as the sickness broke out he was not allowed to come. Part of the service was

generally read, on Sunday, by the officers to the men of their own companies; and the officers, in rotation, took the duty, morning and evening, of burying the dead, which sometimes, of our English regiment only, exceeded ten daily. Hedley Vicars undertook this duty several times for others, and seldom, *if ever*, performed it without adding a few earnest words to the men present. Soon after the sickness broke out, he used regularly to visit the hospitals, reading and praying with the dying men, and taking every opportunity of speaking of the 'one thing needful' to others. In these visits to the hospitals he was sometimes accompanied by two or three of his brother officers, one of whom, Major Colville, has since died in the Crimea.

"With all his zeal, he was ever careful to avoid giving offence. I have known him erase passages which seemed to speak harshly of Roman Catholics from tracts he was about to distribute generally amongst the men. Much as he abhorred Popery, he had the greatest tenderness for the feelings of Roman Catholics. His constant kindness and sympathy for all, of any creed, and whether officers or men, is not easily to be described. When others were depressed, he was always hopeful. His spirits were hardly ever cast down.

"All these things you must have heard from others. The most remarkable thing about him—his

great consistency of life and conversation, with his entire devotion to the one cause ever set before him—I seem to be unable to put into words."

The history of this solemn time is more fully given in his own earnest letters :—

"*Piræus, July* 21, 1854.

" . . . . I know that what I have to tell you will cause you great anxiety ; but the newspapers will give you all particulars, whether I do so or not. The cholera has been raging here. For some time it was with the French alone ; but the day before yesterday we lost one man, and since then, nine have been carried off by it. Oh, dearest friends, pray that this fearful visitation may be the means of awakening solemn thoughts in the stoutest hearts amongst my thoughtless comrades, and leading them for pardon, peace, and safety to Jesus the Saviour of sinners. Do not be alarmed for me. Remember God's delight in answering prayer, and surely no man has such praying friends as I have. How often the happy hours we have passed together come before me, and I wonder whether we shall ever have them over again ! . . . . Should I die now, *you know* my *only* ground of hope, my only confidence, my only assurance is in the cross of Jesus Christ and in the knowledge that the 'precious blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin :'—words as full of sweetness and of consolation to me now as on the day

when they were first made to my soul, 'the power of God unto salvation.' Death in *this* form, at all events, has its gloom even for Christians; but then the sting, yes, the *sting*, is for *them* completely taken away."

"*Pirœus, July* 25.

"....Death has been busy amongst our poor fellows since I last wrote to you. Twenty-seven have died in seven days. I am quite well, thank God, although in low spirits. How can it be otherwise, seeing so many for whom I had a regard cut off thus suddenly? Several of the officers of my regiment have been ill with fever. They have been mercifully spared from cholera hitherto.

"Do you remember poor young Reynolds, the soldier whom you noticed particularly when you gave the hymn-books to the men at Kensington Barracks, and those kind words of parting counsel which they have never forgotten? I buried him and another comrade last night. I had intended speaking a few words to my men over the open graves of their dead messmates; but it was as much as I could do to get through the service; and as soon as I began to speak to them afterwards, I could not for the life of me help crying like a child. The men cried and sobbed around me. It was of no use to try to go on, so I ordered them to 'fall in,' and we went mournfully back to the barracks.

"Morning and evening the dead-cart leaves the hospital for the graveyard. It is all very sad and solemn, but 'there is a silver lining to the darkest cloud.' I believe that to many this dread visitation of the Almighty has taught a lesson which I trust and hope will never be forgotten. Alas! that so few have the *comfort* of religion, the knowledge of Jesus Christ! With some of my brother officers I have lately had most earnest conversations, and they have promised to come to my room that we may read the Bible together. Oh, that I may be enabled to speak a word in season to their souls, and by my poor feeble testimony to His tenderness and love, lead them to that precious Saviour who died for sinners! We meet for prayer every evening, with peculiar reference to the removal of this grievous sickness, if it please God, and for the gift of His Holy Spirit to sanctify the visitation."

"*July* 26.—Since I wrote the above, five more have died. One of them was my former servant, poor Hylyard. I took the service for the officer whose turn it was to command the funeral party, and said a few words to the soldiers who were standing around the graves, and asked them to join in prayer with me. I heard the voices of many, broken by their sobs. Not one of these fine fellows would hesitate to face a cannon's mouth or mount the deadly breach, yet they shrink from the fearful ravages of this unseen foe.

Will you all pray for my regiment? Pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them. Few are as yet prepared to die. God bless and keep you all! In the midst of these gloomy scenes I think as often as ever of L——, and, if possible, with even more overflowing thankfulness and love."

"*Piræus, August* 12.

". . . . One hundred and five have died since the cholera broke out; most of them were amongst the finest, healthiest fellows in the regiment. I have many opportunities now of speaking both to officers and men, and trust and believe, in some cases, not without benefit. I have taken the duty of burying the dead several times out of my turn, as some of the officers have rather an objection to it, and I have been enabled to speak to the men after the service. They endeavour to join me in prayer very earnestly around those open graves. As all the officers, excepting myself and two others, have been ill, either with fever or modified cholera, I have regularly gone to read with them; and all are kind, whilst many seem cordially to desire more of it. In one or two cases, from what I knew of the men when well, I thought the subject of Christ crucified might not be liked; but it was just the contrary! The very fellows whom I had most fear about speaking to were those who listened most attentively and seemed to be the most interested.

"In my own soul I have enjoyed a peaceful, happy time, leaning on Jesus. It is true, this is a spiritual desert, but seldom have I had more hungerings and thirstings after Christ and holiness. With David I can say, 'My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee, in a dry and thirsty land where no water is.' But you have taught me not to be selfishly engrossed with my own spirit, but to seek to have my soul drawn out to the hungry, to seek diligently after wandering sheep; and the deeper one's anxiety, the deeper is one's interest and delight in the work. Your precious letters help and sustain me. God bless you for them! . . . . N—— is most interesting to me now. Trusting in the strength of Jesus, I believe his mind is made up 'to follow the Lord wholly.' He comes to my room every evening, and we generally walk together. Four companies have gone to the hills for change of air. I never was better in my life, though, of course, not quite so strong as when I left old England."

"*Pirœus, August* 18.

". . . . About seventy of my hundred and seven comrades who have died of cholera were men whom I knew well, as they entered the service about the same time that I did. I do hope that some, nay, that many, amongst them were enabled to look to Jesus in their last moments. God grant we may find such to have been the case when we all meet at the last day.

"Poor Cottrell has been ill again, but is recovering. The Scripture-reading is in the ward where he is, and he is very attentive, as indeed they all are. The day before yesterday, whilst going round the wards, I noticed one poor young fellow who had been admitted about an hour before. His eyes were sunken, and his hollow cheek and blackened face proclaimed that this fearful disease had seized upon him with the grasp of death. I spoke to him for a little while, and then passed on to others. The next day his bed was empty. One of the orderlies told me that he suffered much in his mind before he died. He had his senses to the last, which is very unusual. It appears that he had been a Protestant, but became a pervert to the Church of Rome. He expressed a wish to die in his former faith, and asked one of the men for a Prayer-book. Not one was at hand. He then said, 'Read me the first chapter of the Gospel of St John.' At its close, he said he felt much relieved in his mind, *and died.* Oh! we *will* believe that he was enabled to 'behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.' I cannot tell you how sorry I am that I was not there. One of the orderlies would have come for me, but not one could be spared from the hospital.

"Last Sunday one of my brother officers was attacked with cholera, but he has, thank God, got over it. I went to see him several times, and talked to

him about Jesus. Every time I went he told me how glad he was of it. I write a line by every mail now to tell you of my safety. I am enjoying great peace of soul, resting on Jesus, on Him alone."

"*Pirœus, August* 21, 22.

"No one can fancy in England what the arrival of the mail is here, nor the power of letters like yours to cheer one's heart when all around is gloom and death. Your letters and your prayers have nerved me to do many things which otherwise I should not perhaps have attempted. I feel that I can never tell you what a blessing God has made you to me in every way. It was you who first raised in my heart a really strong desire to save souls, to win fellow-sinners to the cross of Jesus Christ, not as a mere duty, but as the heart's delight. I cannot express how deeply grateful I feel towards you, best and dearest of all my earthly friends. But God knows it and hears my poor prayers for you. . . . .

"You will be thankful to hear there is a decrease of cholera. The last man we have lost (one of the Light Company) was admitted into hospital last night. Poor fellow, he suffered most dreadfully; it was quite painful to stand by his bedside. I remained with him for nearly an hour, and spoke to him from time to time of Jesus Christ. But whenever the cramps came on, his screams quite drowned my voice. On

leaving, I shook hands with him (his were black and cold), and told him to 'behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world,' to look to Jesus, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. When I mentioned the name of Jesus, he gave me such a wonderful look, full of peace and resignation. In less than four hours afterwards his soul had fled.

"Only fifteen are in hospital now with cholera; the fever hospital is still crowded; but I should think no disease, except the plague, can be so horrible as Asiatic cholera. I saw its ravages in Jamaica, but that which has raged here seems to have been of a more virulent nature, and death has come on more rapidly; it so alters the countenance that often I have been quite unable to recognise dying men whom I found, on asking their names, that I knew very well.

"My Scripture-reading and prayer-meeting at the hospital is better attended than ever. Last Sunday I read the twelfth chapter of Hebrews in one of the wards; and after talking to the men about it, felt my heart drawn out earnestly in prayer for their souls. My chief, my only subject with them, is JESUS, and it is a theme of which I hope *never* to grow tired. May God the Holy Ghost bless my feeble words to their immortal souls, for Jesus Christ's sake!

"I want to persuade all the men of my regiment that nothing would ever give me greater pleasure than

to read and pray with them, at any hour, day or night, when any of them are ill or dying, if they would only send an orderly to let me know.

"With Cottrell, who is still in hospital, I have had many earnest conversations. Corporal Farmer, whom I mentioned to you, is slowly sinking of consumption; he is very peaceful, resting all his hope on Jesus. The men, both in hospital and in barracks, have read most eagerly the tracts which I have distributed amongst them. Captain Trotter added largely to my stock; but I have not one too many. I hope and pray that they may be the means of leading numbers to search the Scriptures.

"Thank the villagers at Beckenham for their prayers for us. God bless them all."

"*Piræus, August* 23.

". . . . . God has answered prayer for me,—both for body and soul. Tell dear Mr Chalmers how very grateful I am to him for praying for me at his prayer-meeting for the army.

"The cholera has again broken out in my poor regiment. Last night poor S———, of my Company, a fine powerful young man, was admitted into hospital; he had been an orderly attending on cholera patients, and had therefore seen many die. I went to see him several times in the course of the night, but he would not speak or listen to me; he died soon

after I left him for the last time, and was buried this morning."

"*August* 26, *half-past* 11, P.M.

"Nine men have died since the 23d,—four from the Light Company. We have suffered more severely than any. Last night I was at the hospital four or five times. I went especially to see Egan, an old soldier, who had been seventeen years in my Company. Poor fellow! he was so grateful; he said, when I wished him good-bye for the last time, 'God bless *you*, Sir; and may the blessings of an old man rest upon your head, for coming to see and talk with an old comrade, when stretched out like this. Yes, Sir, and you have the love and blessing of every man in the regiment.' I just tell you what he said, because it will give you pleasure. I feel myself that I have not done a quarter of what I ought to have done.

"I had hardly got home from seeing Egan, when I received a message by an orderly from a young drummer, who wanted to see me again. He was very ill of cholera, when I had spoken to him before; but it was thought that he would recover. I hurried to the hospital, but the lad was insensible. However, I offered up a prayer over his bed, the men taking off their caps, and joining in, as well as they could follow me. He died soon afterwards.

"Sergeant Jackson was brought into hospital at

eleven o'clock this morning; he was a man I knew very well—much liked amongst the officers. I went twice to-night to see him. The second time his bed was empty. One hundred and eighteen are now dead; all men in the prime and vigour of manhood, except a few lads.

"The French are still dying in great numbers every day. They have lost 700 men and five officers, out of their small force in Greece. The townspeople are clearing out as fast as possible. Yesterday 500 left. The streets are quite deserted, except by French and English soldiers.

"Another company of ours started for Mount Pentelicus the day before yesterday. I accompanied them about three miles. Nares went with them; he did not like to leave me, and I feel lonely now he is gone, for he was with me at all hours of the day.

"Obert is the Captain of the Company which has just left: he was very ill, but, thank God! he is recovering, dear fellow.

"I am so grateful to hear that we are remembered in prayer by those blessed Christians at Huntly Lodge! The Lord reward them!"

"*Sunday, August* 27.

"Our Scripture-reading and prayer-meeting at the hospital are still well attended. I always feel refreshed and strengthened myself, whilst talking of

Jesus to others. Surely there is no subject so delightful to a sinner as 'Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.' God grant that His love may lead many—*all* in my regiment—to take up their Cross, and follow Him. I daily find Him to be more lovely and precious to my own soul. What I want now, whilst I have the opportunity, is, to make others as happy as myself; for well I know, from long and bitter experience, that until the blood of the Cross speaks peace to the soul, man is, for the most part, but discontented and miserable. And if this is the case when we are strong and healthy, how much more so when sick or dying! Men often talk with unconcern of a dying bed, when they think it distant, and refuse to 'give way to weakness,' as they call it, by thinking of it in time; but it is seldom the dream continues to the end; and when the reality flashes upon them, it is sometimes *too late!* Although even at the very last, Jesus is ready to save, yet not a few give up all as lost, and die in despair.

"But we will hope better things, dearest friend, for the men of my poor regiment, and continue to pray that the Dayspring from on high which hath visited *us*, by the free grace and mercy of God may be shed abroad over them *all*, 'to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and to guide their feet into the way of peace.' God grant it, for for Jesus Christ's sake!

"It was not my servant whom you saw at Ken-

sington who died of cholera, but a man named Hylyard, who left me about a year ago. Richard Young, I am glad to say, is well. I often see him reading the book you gave him.

"I am advised to go to Pentelicus, for a few days' change, but have not made up my mind to it, as I have plenty to do here. *Certainly*, I shall not go as long as the cholera remains here. It is, I trust, leaving us now, but such has been its malignity, that only twenty of those who have been attacked with it have come out of hospital alive.

"The army in Turkey has also suffered severely from the pestilence. Rumours are now afloat that we are to be sent on thither. We all desire it most heartily.

"God bless you all.

"Ever, most beloved friend and sister, your most attached and grateful brother,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will shew them His covenant." That covenant is "of life and peace,"—words which had their peculiar charm for Hedley Vicars. There was no morbid weariness of existence in him. Love and hope were strong in his heart, and the future had its own bright pictures before his imagination. Death, in itself, was not a thing which he desired; he de-

lighted in viewing it as "a mere incident in *life*." His soul was kept in peace, amidst "nothing but death, death on every side" (to use his own expression), because he knew and felt that "he that hath the Son of God *hath life;*" and with love to that Saviour rising above all other love, he could then write—

"Death is dreaded as a fearful thing to go through; but I think, with Jesus very near me, I could welcome it to-morrow. The prospect of meeting in a few hours that glorious Saviour, whose love we can never conceive here in all its magnitude, makes me long 'to depart and be with Christ.'"

By the beginning of September, the cholera had disappeared from the Piræus. Only the 103d Psalm now seemed to furnish words warm enough for the language of his grateful heart. For a time he was cheered by the hope that the impression left by this visitation on the minds of a large number of his regiment was deep and effectual; but towards the close of that month we find him thus writing—

"Whilst I see, and bless God for it, a great and visible change in *many*, yet, alas! in numbers it grieves me to perceive that solemn impressions are vanishing like 'the morning cloud or early dew.' To

some of these I have spoken; and if I chance to meet them when alone, they express sorrow and regret for their ingratitude to the God of all their mercies; and I believe they often mean (*in a kind of way*) what they say; but when several congregate together, each becomes afraid of what his comrade will think of him, until it seems to be the careful endeavour of all to appear as little serious as possible! But whilst I write this, I feel as bad myself; for, oh! what weak gratitude, what cold love have I too often felt, to that great Father who has preserved me through all the dangers which lately surrounded me, even from 'the pestilence that walked in darkness, and the destruction that wasted at noonday!'

"And then, again, with regard to His infinitely greater love in sparing not His own Son, to obtain eternal redemption for us, I sometimes think I am one of 'the nine' who 'returned not to give glory to God;' and those words of Jesus seem spoken of me, in touching tones of reproach, 'Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?' Oh! how often when, by the eye of faith, I see Him on the cross, or lying dead in the tomb, I am pained to the quick by the coldness of my evil heart, and with the weariness and want of love with which I 'remember Jesus.' *Should* He have to *ask* us to remember Him? The promptings of our hearts should ever be, 'I *cannot* forget Thee.'

"But we know, through the teaching of God the Holy Ghost, that we should never have thought of Jesus at all, or have loved Him in the least, if He had not first loved us, and revealed himself to our souls. Therefore, whilst we mourn (*I*, at least, find need to do so *often*) over our own hearts, we *can*, and *will*, and *do* rejoice 'with joy unspeakable' in the never-changing, never-dying love of JESUS CHRIST, our blessed Saviour.

. . . . . .

"I had a charming trip to Pentelicus. The tents are pitched under fine lofty trees, large hills completely surrounding the camp on every side. Mountain torrents dash through the midst of it, and baths have been constructed both for officers and men. I enjoyed my few days there very much, and thought how perfect it would have been to me if L—— had been with me, to enjoy the wild scenery and glorious moonlight. But on *this* subject I have enlarged to herself. I was gratified by seeing the change which had taken place in one of my young brother officers, with whom I formerly joined in many a wild frolic. I remember his once saying to me (I think it was at Canterbury), when I had spoken to him earnestly about his soul, 'Oh, Vicars, my dear fellow, I *believe* in a call, and am only *waiting* for a call. It is plain enough *you* have had one. Why, the other day you were pulling down lamp-posts with me; and now just

look at you!' But I trust that, in a severe fever which he had here, he learnt that the 'call' was ever sounding in his ears, if he would but listen to it—'WHOSOEVER will, let him drink of the water of life freely!'

"I often feel myself a weak and helpless creature when defending the glorious 'truth as it is in Jesus' against the arguments of men for whom He died, who yet deny Him. But I *never* enter into discussion without first seeking the light and aid of the Holy Spirit to guide and direct me, so that every word may be according to 'the mind of Christ'—'speaking the *truth* in *love*.' To men of my own age, I can now speak more boldly than I could a little while ago. But I do find it very hard to say anything on these subjects to an old man. I pray to be enabled to do so, when the occasion comes, with courage, but always with deference and respect.

"I have lately had some conversation with one of my brother officers who began the Christian course about the same time that I did, but became a sceptic afterwards. I think I see a re-awakening. Oh! help me in praying that soon, 'in returning and rest, he may be saved;' that, accepting the mercy which the Gospel reveals, he may soon find the reality, the joy, the delight of the religion of Jesus Christ.

"Thank and bless all who have prayed for me and my regiment during the time of the pestilence. Espe-

cially thank your beloved friend Mrs Mackenzie and her family, and Dr Tetley and their friends, for their united prayer on our behalf. Who knows but that I may some day have the pleasure of thanking them myself? ONE day, by the grace of God, I shall."

TO MISS VICARS.

"*Pirœus, Sept.* 27–30.

" . . . . It is a very gloomy day, the sky black and lowering, and the rain descending in torrents. I was meditating just now on this bleak scene of cheerless solitude—my only companion a little quail!—and thinking over the strange and often appalling sights my eyes have looked upon, in the realities of death and the grave, since God called me here. As these ideas floated through my mind, the train of my thoughts suddenly changed, and the dismal view without, and the cold and dreary room I occupy, brought before me 'the Man of Sorrows'—Jesus—who once weathered the stormy tempest for you and for me, and of whom it may be said, from the manger to the grave, that He had not 'where to lay his head.' It is so soothing to the soul, in seasons of cloud and distress, to know that Jesus hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, and to rest on the tender kindness of Him who has said, 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.'

" 'Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the billows near me roll,
While the tempest still is high:
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past:
Safe into the haven guide—
Oh! receive my soul at last!'

"Oh! dearest Mary, it is well to have the love of Jesus Christ in its reality in our hearts. What solid peace and rich enjoyment we obtain by 'looking unto Jesus!' Where else shall we behold the boundless love of our Heavenly Father?

"What else could have led me to the side of men dying of pestilence, for how could I have spoken to these poor suffering creatures of the love of God but by 'looking unto Jesus?' And to whom could I implore them to look, but to Jesus? Baptismal regeneration, Church privileges, the sacramental system, confession, and priestly absolution may do for some people when in health, but no smile of joy from a sick man, I *believe*, would ever be the fruit of such miserable comforters in the last hour. When a dying man can say or feel, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' he wants no more; it is Jesus he thirsts for and longs to hear about. I have witnessed the effect of even the name of Jesus. I have noticed a calm and peaceful look pass more than once over the ghastly face of the dying as that blessed name passed

my lips. May we not hope, dearest sister, that (as it was with the dying thief) even at the hour of death, faith in the blood of Jesus, breathed into the soul by the Holy Ghost, has set more jewels in the Redeemer's crown from among the soldiers of the 97th Regiment? God grant that, when you and I are summoned before the bar of Christ, we may meet many such, 'clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands!'

"It is sad to think what harm even well-intentioned people may do by wandering away from the cross in their dealings with sick men. I remember I used often to visit at Halifax a Corporal Craney, of the 42d Highlanders, who was left behind in hospital when his regiment went away. One evening when I went to see him, he said to me, 'I am so glad you are come, Sir, for you always speak to me of Him of whom I love to hear, even Jesus, my precious Saviour. But just now, Sir, I had a visit from a gentleman, who said to me, with a loud voice and harsh tone, "Now, are you sure you have repented of your sins? Are you certain you are not deceiving yourself?"' Now, is not this worse than useless, when a man has given clear evidence of repentance and living faith? When one has reason to suspect the sincerity of a man who professes faith in Jesus, then, still keeping before his eyes the cross of Christ to prevent despair, probe and search him deeply, and endeavour to make him

examine himself; but never open a wound without instantly giving the remedy. There are hypocrites in the world, we all know,—men who, while they talk with earnestness of their love to the Saviour, yet virtually crucify Him in their lives; and much scandal is brought by them on the Church of Christ. But it is *not* the preaching of a free Gospel, as some suppose, that makes them so, but their own total ignorance of the saving doctrines of the Cross, and of the power of the Holy Ghost upon their hearts.

"I do not think I ever told you of Craney's happy death. Shortly before he breathed his last, he asked Dr Twining to read Romans viii. to him. As he read, the dying man's breath became shorter and his face brighter; and as the last words fell upon his ear—'Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord'—he said, 'Thank you, Sir; *that will do*,' and died.

"I have no news to tell you, my darling sister. You will, of course, have heard of the grand victory gained by the Allies over the Russians. Whilst I would not have missed the time of the cholera, or have been absent a day while my regiment suffered from its ravages, yet, I must confess, I should have wished to have been now at the post of danger—the proper place for a soldier. I do not think my chief motive in this desire is the wish for military distinc-

tion, although ready and willing to do my duty as a soldier. I trust my motives are more in accordance with the mind of Christ. The carnage of the battle-field has no attractions for me; but there is a wide field for missionary labour, when the roar of the cannon has ceased, and the deadly strife is over. There are wounded men, who have souls to be saved, and dying men to be told to 'look to Jesus:' not to speak of the comfort to a poor soldier of having a 'friend in need.' Of this I am sure, that the private soldiers are most grateful for any kindness from an officer, especially when they are sick and in hospital, and they think and talk much of officers who thus visit them, and endeavour to cheer them in their dreary wards. But as God has so ordered it that we should remain here, I desire to give up my own will about it."

There was a tone about his letters during the latter part of the month of September, which impressed us with the idea that his health and spirits were somewhat failing. For some time after the trial of the cholera season was over, he continued to be a constant visitor at the hospitals, where fever cases were still numerous. But doubtless, it was the extent of his exertions during those weeks when he had watched day and night beside the suffering and the dying, with an intensity of interest in their undying souls, which produced too severe a tension of his nervous sys-

tem; so that, when the call for exertion had passed away, he sunk into a state of extreme physical weakness. This, in its turn, produced a mental depression, which cast its shadow upon his religious experience. No man could be so keenly alive to spiritual joy, without an equally exquisite susceptibility to spiritual suffering. "Where you find your greatest pleasures," said an old divine, "there expect your deepest sorrows." Yet how different are these from "the sorrow of the world, which worketh death!"

In a letter, written early in October, Hedley Vicars thus expresses himself:—

"You seem to know my state by intuition, and never fail to speak comfort to my heart and soul by your letters. What dark and cloudy days are these, to one whose heart has tasted how sweet and precious Christ is, when the Saviour withdraws the light of his countenance, and seems to leave the soul (whom, *nevertheless*, He has promised—blessed truth!—NEVER to forsake), when those glorious promises, which were 'the joy and rejoicing of the heart,' fall heavily on the ear, and fail to bring Jesus *home* to the soul. I suppose I have a more than commonly stony heart, but the Lord is softening it, and causing me, at any rate, to *wish* to be more like Christ.

"At first, when I heard that my precious L. had been ill,—whilst I knew that the Lord would not

afflict willingly,—I found myself a most unbelieving creature, when faith was most wanted; and even now, whilst I am praying most earnestly for her, and for you, and for L——e to be fully restored to health and strength, I fear that it is not with that humble submission to our Father's will, which true faith in his love should impart, following the example of our blessed Redeemer, in saying, 'Not my will, but Thine be done.'"

But it was not for any length of time that the Master, who loved him, left his faithful servant to walk in darkness, and have no light, or at best with but a twilight glimmering from that Sun of Righteousness, who was about to arise again and shine upon his soul with healing in his wings, and scarcely to withdraw Himself any more, until the everlasting day broke, and the shadows of death fled away.

On the 18th of October he writes:—

"I have but just emerged from clouds which have obscured Jesus from my view. I seemed to wander in thick darkness, without my loving Redeemer near to be my stay and delight. But great blessings are often sent to us after short trials; and such I think I am now finding. The Lord Jesus has arisen upon me, and has made His glory manifest to my soul. I feel less *tied down* to this world than I did, and more

ready 'to depart and be with Christ.' Sometimes I long to do so, from fears lest I should ever (I will not say fall away, but) do anything which would dishonour my Saviour. And yet what is this but cowardice,—wishing to leave the battle-strife of earth for the repose of heaven, with Jesus? Oh, rather would I wait patiently, and look for the coming of the Lord! Shall we not hail that bright and glorious day? 'The Spirit and the Bride say, Come,' and our hearts echo, 'Come, Lord Jesus!' Then shall no anxious fears for those whom we love disturb our hearts, warning us that the joys of friendship and of love must end for a time in the cold and dreary grave, for then we shall be changed for ever, and 'the body of this death' shall be 'fashioned like unto His glorious body,' and we shall be together with the Lord, beholding the majesty of Him who was slain for us,—of Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of lords. . . .

"I knew you would enter into my disappointment in not having been ordered on to the Crimea ere this. To say I have not felt it (yes, and deeply too!) would be saying what is not true. But I hope I can leave it now in the hand of my God and Saviour, sure that He orders everything for the best.

"And is it true that William Gregory is dead?*

* A railway workman, at one time employed at the Crystal Palace, who was reported to have died of cholera, but has survived to mourn his friend.

It grieved me very much to hear it. I loved him so heartily, and cannot help sorrowing for him. I had so looked forward to his honest, kindly welcome when I get back to England, if God spare me to return. But we shall walk and talk of Jesus again, in His presence, I believe.

"I greatly enjoy the thought that you three are reading the second lesson for the morning each day *with me.* It adds not a little to my pleasure. I have lately changed my quarters, and have now got a palace of a room, with a beautiful view of the sea, or, rather, the harbour.

"Nares and Macgregor are in the same building with me, and Ensign Derman,* who was lately promoted from Serjeant-Major, and in whom I am much interested; so that I am surrounded by those I should wish to have near me. With Derman I have had several most delightful conversations, and I believe he will come out boldly on the Lord's side. Decision and courage at first are absolutely necessary for an officer who wishes to become a soldier of the Cross. Without such, he will have endless difficulties and trials, and will have no peace given him by those who oppose, until he returns to the allegiance of

* Ensign, afterwards Lieutenant, Derman, an officer of great promise and of high religious principle, who was raised from the ranks, and afterwards promoted to the Adjutancy of his regiment. He was mortally wounded in the trenches before Sebastopol on the 18th of August 1855.

the god of this world, or else *fearlessly shews his colours.*"

There was another trial to which he was to be subjected, which, though short, was not slight to a heart so keenly alive to anxiety regarding those it loved. Early in October it was stated at the Horse Guards that the 97th had been ordered on to the Crimea. But a delay was occasioned by the want of a transport at Malta to convey the 3d Buffs to replace the 97th in the Piræus. On the 15th of November, with the *Orinoco* again for their transport ship, in the highest spirits, this gallant regiment proceeded to the Crimea, "eleven hundred strong." In ignorance of this delay, Hedley Vicars' family and friends addressed their letters to the Crimea from the middle of October. When the mistake was discovered, no small self-accusation was felt, for a want of forethought in having omitted to despatch letters to both quarters, until the news had arrived that he had sailed. But *now* it is more painful still, to read the anxious inquiry and gentlest reproach, more implied than expressed, to those who would never willingly have caused one solitary pang to that gallant, noble, tender heart.

But the stirring change in his circumstances, brought about by the order from the Horse Guards, considerably diverted his attention from these anxious thoughts. It has been seen how ardently his soldier

heart and missionary spirit alike yearned to be at the seat of war. That devoted constancy of courage which had enabled him to face Death in the pestilential hospital — stripped of all his glories, and clothed in the sad garb of weakness and decay, yet armed with tortures—was now to be exercised in the field of military action.

In addition to the excitement of this immediate prospect, new responsibilities, full of interest for his genial spirit, now devolved upon him. He obtained his company, by purchase, on the 3d of November, and devoted himself with almost fatherly interest to the welfare of his men.

His own letters will best tell his thoughts and feelings on leaving Greece for the Crimea:—

"*Pirœus, Nov.* 2, 1854.

"The order has at length arrived for 'the 97th Regiment to hold itself in readiness for immediate embarkation to join Lord Raglan's army.' The Buffs are now on their way from Malta to relieve us, and will probably be here in two or three days. We are all busily preparing for active service, so I have not much time to spare; but as there may not be another opportunity, I hasten to write a few farewell lines. There are times when the heart feels more

powerfully drawn to those whom it loves best. It is so with me now, as I recall to mind that beloved friend with whom I have had such heavenly intercourse, and from whom I have ever experienced such kindness as I can never forget. May the great God who has kept and preserved us until this day, continue to guard and watch over you, and may your hope, and joy, and love increase as you journey on the homeward road towards that happy land where Jesus reigns, and where He is waiting to receive us!

"Before this letter reaches its destination, we shall probably be in front of the enemy. God alone knows whether we shall ever meet again in this world: but, after all, what are the few short years we might have lived in the enjoyment of each other's friendship here, compared to that endless eternity we shall spend together beyond the grave? My soul has lately had to weather many a stormy billow, but (and I know it will delight your heart, ever dearest friend, to hear it) I feel *quite* peaceful and happy now; my own strength was feeble to resist, but Jesus has conquered Satan, and never did I love that blessed Saviour more than I do on this day.

"'Through all the changing scenes of life,
In trouble and in joy,
The praises of my God shall still
My heart and tongue employ.

" ' Of His deliv'rance I will boast,
Till all that are distrest
From my example comfort take,
And charm their griefs to rest.'

" Yesterday I was on guard. About twelve o'clock at night, whilst reading 2 Cor. v., I had such inward joy and peace and comfort, that I felt strongly inclined to awaken the poor fellows who were stretched asleep on the guard-bed in the adjoining room, to pray with them, and to talk to them of the love of Christ! And thus it is (for it seems so selfish to keep all this happiness pent up in one's own heart when it might be shared by others), whenever I have been brought nearest to my Saviour, even 'into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,' I have been constrained and forced, 'while the fire burns,' to 'speak with my tongue,' and to make use of the golden hours of communion with Jesus in the solitude of my chamber, to publish when 'I go without the camp' what the Lord Jesus has done for my soul; *even for me*, than whom a man more undeserving of His mercy does not exist. I felt so merry and happy in that miserable guard-room yesterday! I always make it a rule, after reading to the men the 'orders of the guard,' to warn them against the too prevalant habit of swearing, and, to my great delight, during my whole tour of duty, I did not hear one oath; and, in addition to this, I had the pleasure of hearing several times the

rustling of the leaves of the tracts I had given them; and two or three times, as I passed through their room, I could see them poring over them; and about nine o'clock in the evening, Sergeant Stephens, drawing his chair (an empty cask turned upside down) near the fire, proposed to read aloud, to which a general assent was at once given, and he read a tract called 'The Young Naval Officer' to a most attentive audience. I was reading my Bible when he commenced, and I could not help stopping and listening. I cannot tell you how happy I felt as I heard him recounting the history of a soul brought to Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit, and earnestly did I pray that some of those poor fellows might also be led to behold that same Saviour bleeding for them on the cross.

"It grieves me to think of the sorrow it will cause to my L—— and to you should anything happen to me; but for myself, I fear not. If I were trusting to myself in *any way*, I might indeed tremble at the whistling of every bullet, and dread being summoned in an instant before the judgment-seat of Christ; but I can see no cause for alarm, even at the very moment when soul and body are about to separate, with the crimson cross in full view.

"'For ever here my rest shall be,
Close to Thy bleeding side;
This all my hope and all my plea,
For me the Saviour died.'

"I intend to carry constantly about with me a Testament, my little hymn-book, that precious little Book of Psalms you gave me, and also your last gift, which I have found such a feast to my soul, 'Hawker's Morning Portion.' I think with these I can get on very well in the Crimea. I had a large meeting of officers in my room for prayer last Sunday afternoon. A number of the sergeants and corporals were coming next Sunday, but I suppose we shall not spend another Sunday here; however, there is nothing to prevent our having our little meetings in the Crimea.

"I received your precious letter of the 15th on my return from a march into the country this afternoon. I thank God you are all well again. Thank you again for your deeply-valued prayers, and thank all those who have so remembered me. May such proofs of Christian love lead me in like manner to remember, when I kneel before the Lord, *all* my friends and acquaintances. The cholera has broken out at Athens, and several people have died; but, from accounts received to-day, it appears to be already subsiding.

"The French troops quartered here are anxiously expecting the arrival of the transports to take them on to the seat of war. I pity the poor Buffs who are to relieve us, and remain in this dull place. The whole 97th Regiment, officers and men, are delighted

at the prospect of measuring their strength with the 'Roossians' (as the soldiers call them).

"There cannot be a doubt that it is a just war we are engaged in; and therefore I say with them, the sooner we are 'let loose' the better. I think the Russians will find the 'Celestials' rather awkward customers to deal with;—*nous verrons!* There are some people, I know, who cannot imagine how any Christian could ever join the deadly strife of battle; but I can only say that with such I do not agree (and I am sure you do not either), so that I shall not flinch from doing my duty to my Queen and country, the Lord being my helper.

"I consider war to be a dire calamity, but as much a visitation from the Almighty as cholera or any other scourge; and as on the appearance of that dreadful malady, we do not sit quietly down and let it take its course, but very rightly (trusting in the blessing of God) use every precaution, and employ every means to drive it from amongst us, so in the case of this war with the Russian despot. He has made an aggression upon a country (one of our oldest allies), which had given him no just cause of provocation, and has thus disturbed the peace of Europe, and let loose upon us the horrors of war, and shall we Britons let him have his own way, and tamely look on? God forbid! Rather will we, the Lord

being our 'shield and buckler,' crush the evil, and restore peace and quietness to the land.

"A large steamer came in this morning for two French regiments that are to go on to the Crimea. We are anxiously looking out for our steamer."

"*On board the Orinoco,*
"17*th of November.*

"The ship came into the Piræus so unexpectedly, and was off again with us on board so very soon, that I had not a moment's time to write to you at starting.

"The little packet sent in *September*, arrived the day before we left Greece. I cannot tell you what delight it gives me. Williams has, indeed, been most successful. The little picture has really the beauty of a miniature with the truth of a daguerreotype. Nothing else in the world could have been of so much value to me. It brings her so forcibly to my memory. . . . God grant I may soon have good news of you all.

"I cannot imagine why I have not heard for so long a time. You would not, I *know*, willingly deprive me of my greatest earthly solace.

"Farewell now, dearest, best of friends. May grace and peace be *multiplied* unto you!

"I have much to distract me now; but, in 'look-

ing unto Jesus,' I find still, as in happier times, comfort and peace.

"Blessings on you all.

"Ever your most deeply attached friend and brother,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

CHAPTER IX.

Winter before Sebastopol.

"The feign'd retreat, the nightly ambuscade,
The daily harass, and the fight delay'd,
The long privation of the hoped supply,
The tentless rest beneath the humid sky,
The stubborn wall, that mocks the leaguer's art,
And palls the patience of his baffled heart:
Of these they had not deem'd. The battle day
They could encounter as a veteran may;
But more preferr'd the fury of the strife
And present death to hourly suffering life."

THE miseries of the winter before Sebastopol have passed into history. It is not needful here to describe the sufferings of our country in the persons of her bravest sons, or to recall the unforgotten story of her dearly-bought victories. Battles won on the cold soil of the Crimea, by weary men, worn down by hunger, bore terrible witness to the quenchless nature of British courage. The men who stormed the heights of Alma,—who, in the dreadful fight of Inkermann, conquered again, amidst fogs and darkness,—of whom a mere handful, at Balaklava, were seen "charging an army, while all the world wondered;"—such men had proved their steel. Yet there is a limit to human endurance; and when men of this mould *have been seen to weep*,* as on night after night, succeeding days of starvation and toil, they were ordered to their work in the freezing trenches, who can estimate the exhausting misery they had first endured?

* Crimean Correspondence.

It was amidst scenes like these, and sadder still—on the mud-floor of the hospital-tents, that Hedley Vicars' faith was to have its last trial. Sharing, as he did, in no slight measure, the general toil and privation, with the superadded amount of suffering inseparable from his power of strong sympathy, he was ever fulfilling the apostolic injunction, "Bear ye one another's burdens." His faith was not permitted to waver. Through the long dark night of that winter, its lamp never wanted oil, but burnt with a clear and steady light which not only cheered those around but also cast its bright reflection upon praying spirits three thousand miles distant.

From the north of Scotland to the south of England, there were people of God who gave Him thanks for the cheerful hope, and faith working by love, which breathed through the language of this young soldier's letters.

It has been remarked by a keen observer of human nature, who himself passed through the same ordeal, that in the course of that winter in the Crimea, the individual characteristics of men stood out in more striking colours than could have been seen under other circumstances. The selfish became more tenaciously selfish than before, whilst those who were capable of rising to the heights of self-denial, lived a life of daily heroism.

The reader will be prepared to hear that Hedley

Vicars ranked amongst the last. To give only one or two of many instances which have been mentioned by his brother officers, or by the men of his regiment, is all that can be requisite here.

During the severe cold of that winter, the only bed he allowed himself was made of stones and leaves, until a fur rug arrived from England, which he felt was invested with a kind of claim of friendship to be retained for his own use. Everything else which could bear the name of luxury, or even of common comfort, was given to the deeper necessities of the suffering soldiers.

Towards the end of November, he was in command of an outpost, which was not only an important position, open to the attack of the enemy, but was also a picquet, furnished by the 97th. On either side of it were hills, covered with stunted brushwood: in front was a ravine, leading to Sebastopol. Here, by day, a subaltern was in command of fifty men; by night, the captain on duty with fifty more. The first force was then sent up to a cave on the left of the ravine, where a breastwork had been thrown up. For nearly three weeks, the party defending the outpost had to sleep in the open air, or at best under roofing made of bushes, through which the wind and rain freely penetrated. At length, however, two tents were pitched,—one for the company, the other for its officer. Hedley gave up his own tent to his men, and continued to

rough it in the open air, considering himself more hardy than many of them.*

There is in many of his letters at this time a singular combination of almost apostolic devotedness and love, with the gallant ardour of the soldier—leading to an almost boyish anticipation of "a brush with the Russians."

Perhaps the best illustration of this twofold life, so to speak, is given in the following letter:—

TO LADY RAYLEIGH.

"*Camp before Sebastopol,*
"*November* 29, 1854.

"My own darling Clara,—I received your delightful letter yesterday, together with three from Beckenham. I think I never had a richer treat. I was grieved to hear of your severe illness, but thank God you are now recovering. It rejoices my heart to hear that you enjoyed so much of the presence of the Lord Jesus. When sickness is thus blessed, how earnestly can we say with David, 'It is good for me to have been afflicted;' I love the Lord for having brought me closer to Himself. God grant that when

* This circumstance was also mentioned to the writer, with grateful appreciation, by a private of the 4th Light Dragoons, when in hospital in England many months afterwards. He said, "It had been much thought of amongst soldiers in the Crimea."

you are restored to health you may never forget the love of that blessed Saviour who was with you in the long hours of pain and weariness, when no earthly friend could help you.

"O, beloved Clara, may the merciful pity and love of Jesus constrain each of us to adore Him more, and to give up our whole hearts to Him! Let us earnestly pray for more faith in His atoning sacrifice, for 'the love of Christ' is but an empty sound to us until we have by faith seen Him nailed to the cross *for us*. Oh, may we ever think of Jesus as our best and dearest Friend and Brother, one whose loving-kindness never changes; and then, in that great day when the thorny crown shall be replaced by the royal diadem, and Jesus as Lord of all shall ask, 'Lovest thou me?' our hearts may be able to answer with humility, and yet with confidence, 'Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.' . . . Thank you for praying for me. I must tell you that I never was in better health than at this time, nor in better spirits, as far as I am myself concerned.

"We had delightful weather while sailing up the Bosphorus; the scenery was charming, but the large white hospital at Scutari gave me rather a sickening feeling at my heart. In the Black Sea we encountered very stormy weather, but came all safe in sight of the Crimea on the afternoon of the 19th, and the same night anchored in a small bay. The sea was

covered with floating pieces of wrecked vessels, many ships having been lost off the coast but a few days before; and some of our fellows saw dead bodies floating about. The harbour of Balaklava is very small, and the entrance narrow. Here about a hundred sail were anchored side by side, all of them more or less damaged, some entirely dismasted.

"We did not go on shore till the evening of the 20th. The rain poured in torrents all day. We landed in boats, and were well drenched before we reached the encamping ground, and looked more like drowned rats than live soldiers. It was dark before the tents were pitched. Parties were at once sent out to collect firewood, the wrecked vessels furnishing us with ample materials. Soon, camp-fires were blazing in all directions, and officers and men gathered round them to dry their clothes and warm themselves, for the nights here are bitterly cold. I can assure you I enjoyed some cheese and biscuit not a little. But before I looked after myself, I saw my company as snug and comfortable as 'adverse circumstances would admit of,' and afterwards made them a little speech around the bivouac fire, combining, as well as I could, some religious advice with a few words about our duties as British soldiers, and ended by saying, 'Lads, while I have life, I will stick to the colours, and I know you will never desert me.' (My position in line is next to the officer who bears the

regimental colours.) The poor fellows cheered me long and loud. I have had very little trouble with them—less so by far than others complain of. Indeed (though I say it, that should not), I know they like me and would do anything for me; and all officers who treat soldiers like men with the same feelings as their own, and take an interest in their welfare, find they do not see much insubordination nor want many courts-martial. Yet I am very strict with my men, but they soon get accustomed to this. About ten o'clock I read by the light of my first bivouac fire Psalms xxiii., xc., and xci., with Captain Ingram, and derived great comfort and peace from them. One of my brother officers came up to warm himself while I was reading, and begged me to go on (not that I had any intention of stopping). God grant that he may soon find 'a dwelling in the secret place of the Most High,' even in the heart of the Lord Jesus; and be able to say, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I will not fear what man can do unto me.' Resting on Jesus, my precious Saviour, I went to sleep securely. My bed was made of dry leaves, with a stone for the pillow, and but for the biting cold, I should have slept like a top.

The regiment fell in at daybreak. We had a fine view of the surrounding country. Encamped on our right was the brigade of Highlanders, their tents stretching away on the heights above us. Beneath

lay the burial-ground, in which the Turkish soldiers were continually burying their dead. Far away in our front was the plain with the battery beyond, in endeavouring to take which the Light Cavalry suffered so fearfully. Through our telescopes we could see the Russians moving about like bees. Our lines are very extensive and naturally strong, all the country around being hilly. I took a stroll into the country, and enjoyed the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, sitting in the dry bed of a mountain torrent. From the top of a mountain range covered with brushwood I had a fine view of the cavalry encampment.

"In the afternoon I walked into Balaklava, a miserable place, the streets indescribably dirty. Many British, French, Turkish, and Tartar soldiers were moving about in all directions. I saw several men of the Guards looking very different to the appearance they present in St James's Square, with unwashed faces, tattered coats, and trousers patched with red and gray. Dead cattle were lying by the wayside, and others were quietly dying. The condition of the once beautiful horses of the Scots Greys was such, that a butcher would have been ashamed to be seen driving one in his cart.

"Our things are still at Balaklava, and so are the stores! But my servant managed to get a piece of bullock for my subaltern and myself, on which we fared sumptuously.

"In the night we heard a sharp firing of musketry; it lasted some time, relieved occasionally by the booming of artillery. Next day we heard that Lieutenant Tryon and fifteen men of the Rifle Brigade had been killed in a brush with the enemy's advanced picquets. However, our fellows completely defeated them and took their position.

"On the morning of the 22d we received the order to march for the lines before Sebastopol, and came in sight of the white tents of the French and English, after a rough march of seven miles. Vestiges of war were to be seen all along the road. Ten dead horses were laid in one place side by side, and the ground was strewn with shell and round shot. The Zouaves turned out as we passed their camp, and cheered us most vociferously. We returned the cheer with as hearty a goodwill, and soon after reached our ground. The tents were soon pitched, and, although very wet, I never slept more soundly in my life. We were scarcely settled, when the rolling of cannon from Sebastopol and the French and English batteries began, and I may say that ever since they have been going at it continually.

"On the morning of the 25th I walked up the hill in our front, and had a fine view of the magnificent fortress and harbour of Sebastopol. I could clearly see the masts in the water across the mouth of the harbour, where the Russians have sunk their men-of-

war. Whilst admiring the place, a cannon ball from one of their batteries whizzed past my ear. I was afterwards told that the Russians think nothing of firing shell and round-shot when they see even one of our fellows. This seems to me like a sportsman going out to shoot snipe with a rifle! The weather has been very stormy, and our poor men are dying fast from cholera, brought on by exposure and want of warm clothing. We have already buried about twenty-two in four days, and a great number are in hospital.

"The duty has been very severe in the trenches, distant about three miles from our camp. I was in them from five in the afternoon till five the next morning, and also on out-lying picquet the whole of the following night, sleeping in the open air, with a few bushes over me. I could hear the tolling of a great bell in Sebastopol, and the voices of the Russians working at their fortifications, as plainly as could be. On the night of the 27th I took a prisoner who was prowling about, fully believing I had hold of a live Russian; but on examining him by daylight he turned out to be only a Turkish soldier! their long light-gray coats are so much like the Russians. No hope of 'cataracts' now. Indeed for a day or two I had not water enough to fill a bath for a midge! But yesterday I got a pint to wash my face and hands with, for sorely they needed it. We have nothing to

complain of in the way of rations. I get one pound of salt pork and as much biscuit as I can eat every day. The other day my subaltern and a party of men gave chase to a young bullock close to the Russian lines. They caught him, and we made a capital dinner off part of him this afternoon.

"We are all anxiously waiting for Lord Raglan to storm Sebastopol; for, though we must lose many in doing it, yet anything would be better than seeing our fine soldiers dying as they are daily. What should be done is to go at it at once, without more dilly-dallying!

"I have not seen a clergyman or a missionary yet. How I should enjoy meeting one who would talk to the men simply about the Cross of Christ! The Holy Ghost always blesses such preaching. We have meetings in my tent for Scripture-reading as often as we can get together, and delightful seasons they are."

"*December* 1*st.*

"I have just returned from another night in the trenches. The rain is descending in torrents. Last night, whilst standing opposite an embrasure, serving out to my men their allowance of grog, a shell whizzed over my head within a foot. The men made a most humble salaam, but I soon got them on their legs again, by threatening to withhold the spirits. The enemy gave us a few more shots, one of which hit

the ground so near as to send the gravel into my face.

"The accounts of the Russians killing our wounded officers and men are too true,—confirmed by all here. Poor Sir Robert Newman was left wounded on the ground during the temporary retreat of his regiment, the Grenadier Guards; when they returned, he was found stabbed through the head and body in several places.

"I saw the rude tablet erected over his grave at Balaklava. These words are engraved on it,—'And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear Him which after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell, yea, I say unto you, Fear Him.' (Luke xii. 4, 5.)

"We all hope soon to have an opportunity of thrashing these savages, and have not a doubt we shall do so when we come across them.

"I am sorry to hear of the Romish nurses being sent to Scutari to attend promiscuously upon Roman Catholics and Protestants. I know enough of Popery to dread its artifices. I pray God to prevent them from turning away, to other mediators, any dying eyes from a dying Saviour.

"In the trenches, the other day, one of our men amused us much. At the first shell which passed

close to him, he dropped down on his back, screaming aloud for a doctor, for he was 'kilt entirely.' The doctor ran up to him, and asked him where he had been hit, when he exclaimed, 'Och, och, doctor! clane through the blanket!!'

"I have the tent to myself to-night, Brinkley being on duty in the trenches. It is curious what delightful dreams I have every time I fall asleep: now I am at Terling, surrounded by all your beloved faces; then again at Beckenham, with those I love so dearly; at another time I am going to read to old Sophy; again, sitting by the blazing fire in the drawing-room, telling tales of the war to dear John; and awake to find my teeth chattering in my head, a sharp stone sticking into my side, the wind howling in gusts and squalls, and a concert of cannon and small shot, with variations from English, French, Turkish, and Russian performers, instead of a chant in the hall.

"It is stated that 20,000 French have landed at Eupatoria, and, as a set off to this, that 30,000 more Russians have entered the Crimea; but, whatever their numbers may be, with God's help, we are sure to beat them. They surprised us at Inkermann, but yet we repulsed them with great slaughter; the British bayonet settled the business; they fight well though; in that battle it was a regular hand-to-hand encounter. A Sergeant of the Scots Fusilier Guards told me that he saw a Guardsman and a Russian both

dead, with each other's bayonets transfixed in their bodies. Campbell, a young officer of the 30th, who was in the 97th at Canterbury, had four or five balls in his clothes; one of them took off the tail of his red coat, in which was his purse, containing nine pounds! The night before last, one of my beautiful dreams was dispelled by a shaking of my tent, and in answer to 'Who is there?' I received the reply, 'Please, Sir, a staff-officer has just ridden into the camp to bid us be ready at a moment's notice; the Russians are moving on our right flank.' 'All right,' said I, and commending myself to my Heavenly Father, fell fast asleep again, knowing I was all ready for a moment's notice. However, we heard no more of it. While I write, musketry is hard at work and cannon roaring. Our fellows say the Russian cheer is a pitiful whine, very unlike the British war-shout! . . . . . I am so glad to hear you had such a pleasant visit from —— and ——. They write with so much love and affection of you, dearest sister, that I love them more than ever. I trust we shall yet have many happy meetings of our united families in this world; but if God wills it otherwise, we cannot, after all, be long separated.

"I often feel sad and low when I think of dearest ——, for I fear that he has not yet been reconciled to God through the blood of the everlasting covenant. If I *am* to die in this war, it would soothe my last

hours were an angel to whisper that he was safe—safe for time and for eternity. If he once tasted how good and gracious the Lord is, and felt in his own soul the safety, confidence, and peace of abiding in Jesus, all worldly pleasures would lose their charm for him. Give my best love to our dearest mother. Oh, how my heart yearns for one more embrace!

"It is with difficulty I manage to scrape together time and materials for writing. My best love to dear Edward when you see him, and to dear Lord Rayleigh. May God bless him in body and soul. My love also to dear aunt Caroline, my darling godson, and all the children, and don't forget old Sophy, Mrs Aves, and Mrs Richardson.—Ever, my own darling Clara, your most affectionate and deeply-attached brother,

"HEDLEY."

All his letters were written in the highest spirits on first landing in the Crimea. The "escape from a winter of being quietly *shelved* in the Piræus," as he expressed it, to the centre of the scene of action, the necessity for constant activity, and the calling forth to the uttermost of his early love of adventure, "dearer for danger," all combined to increase his buoyant tone. "It is no use doing things by halves," he wrote on the 2d of December, "we must go at it hammer and tongs! The men are dispirited, naturally

enough, by losing so many of their comrades from cholera. I can answer for it they would soon cheer up if they were led against the Russians."

To his second sister he writes by the same mail, "The rain is pouring in torrents, but I have this night been in bed, for a wonder, so I shall have a little time to dry; but I pity the poor fellows in the trenches—200 men of ours and 700 of other regiments. The men of all the British regiments are dying in numbers every day, and many are buried without any funeral service. We are now, to mend matters, placed on half rations; but I was never much of an epicure, so I am quite contented with what they give me. Indeed, I have no patience with fellows who are always grumbling. Our hardships certainly are very great, but as soldiers we ought to bear them without a murmur. Many officers, I hear, are now resigning their commissions. I can only say, shame on those who desert their country in her time of need. We all made a great mistake in not bringing warm clothing with us here. I did buy a comforter though, which is more than most fellows can say. Thank God I am very well, and in high spirits, only hoping that Lord Raglan will soon let us try our hand on the Russians."

But this soldier-like letter does not close without an expression of his deeper feelings:—"If even now," he writes, after alluding to the distractions of the

scenes around him, "when sin clings to us hour by hour, and the world with its passing interests so often obscures the pardoning cross from our eyes, we yet love the very name of Jesus, how much more in heaven shall our renewed natures rejoice when we behold the Lord of glory and sit down in the mansions He has prepared for us! Oh, then, precious sister, from whom I may soon be parted here, REMEMBER JESUS, and never be ashamed to confess Christ crucified! Jesus has bled for us, has redeemed us, has saved us. Oh, let us not cause His once-wounded heart to bleed again for us, but, looking for heavenly aid, let us seek never to grieve Him more."

On landing in the Crimea, his heart was cheered by finding a packet of letters which had been accumulating for three weeks or more. "I had begun to fear before I left the Piræus," he wrote in another letter, "that something was wrong; but you would have felt with me that it was worth while to have had the suspense, if you could have seen me whilst I was reading those precious letters on my arrival here (besides my budget from Terling). My heart and arm are nerved *now*, and I am utterly indifferent to hardships or external trials of any kind. . . . . It is six months since I have been within reach of a house of prayer, or have had the opportunity of receiving the Sacrament; yet never have I enjoyed more frequent or precious communion with my Saviour than

I have found in the trenches or in my tent. When, I should like to know, could one find a Saviour more precious than when bullets are falling around like hail?"

Ten days later he gives an account of "such a happy Sabbath," and speaks of his thankfulness in receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper after having been so long deprived of it:—"I am delighted to say we had twenty officers there. I like what I have seen of the chaplain to our division, Mr Parker, very much. He has hard work, indeed, but seems to love it, because it is the service of Christ Jesus."

In the warmth of new friendships he did not forget old and sacred ties, as the following extract will prove:—

"My very dear Dr Twining,—I have only time to write you a few lines, as I have but small leisure here. I write for two reasons—first to thank you once again for the great blessing you have been to my soul. Words cannot express how deeply grateful I am. You have been, in the hands of God, the means of bringing me from the hard service of Satan to the delightful service of Jesus; and at this time, when any moment I may be called hence, I wish once more to offer to you my heart's most fervent thanks. God bless you, and fill you with peace and joy! May the Cross of Christ ever speak comfort to your soul, and

may you find in the day of the Lord Jesus that you have been the blessed means of bringing many to Him." . . . . .

TO MISS VICARS.

"*December* 12.

"I am for the trenches to-morrow morning at three o'clock (I shall be relieved at six o'clock in the evening). I think more of the pouring rain and standing in thick mud all the time, than of Russian grape and bullets; but, you see, we must be content to have both! You will be sorry to hear that sickness is still prevalent, and I am afraid this rain, which began again yesterday after three days of fine weather, will fill the hospitals. Two officers and forty poor fellows were sent down to Balaklava yesterday for the recovery of their health. It was pitiable to see them. Few, if any, will ever return. I saw them off yesterday morning; some wept as they wished me good-bye. They were so delighted to get the tracts and Testaments I had brought with me, that they began reading them aloud as soon as I put them into their hands.

"We have been living like princes lately. I sent my servant the other day to Balaklava to forage for me, and he returned with onions, potatoes, a ham, bread, and (would you believe it?) a case of salt butter! You may imagine what a dinner we had,

and with what excitement we opened the tin of butter; but our faces did not look so jolly when our noses proclaimed that it was rancid! However, I managed to eat it, nevertheless. I have been praised by the Colonel more than once for the state my company is in, so I am as happy as possible, except for the daily diminishing ranks of my poor regiment.

"*Dec.* 18.—I am, thank God, quite well—never better, and what is more, *clean!* You know my weakness for 'cataracts.' Well, I have contrived to get one every day for nearly three weeks; but then I take more pains to get water for myself than most of the fellows. I dined to-day off soaked biscuit fried with lard—a capital dish; boiled ration pork, very good; potatoes, middling; with mustard and salt,—my wine being weak rum and water. I am sure drinking spirits is a bad plan, and, besides being injurious, makes a man colder than ever an hour afterwards. Each officer and man is allowed a gill of rum daily, but I never drink even the half of mine, often none at all. I went on picquet this morning at half-past four o'clock with fifty men; it rained hard for about an hour, the remainder of the night being fine. I kept up a jolly fire all through, and endeavoured to write a letter to darling mother whilst seated opposite its blaze, but I could only get fitful gleams, not bright enough to see to write, so I had soon to give up. I read the First Epistle of Peter, and

then, folding my cloak around me and stretching myself close by the watch-fire, I was sound asleep in ten minutes, notwithstanding the roar of cannon and rattle of musketry, which kept up a concert during the night.

"Thank you, my own darling Mary, for your last dear and affectionate letter. It affected me almost to tears, with its deep tone of sisterly love. Strange would it be if I did not love you fondly in return. You say my letters always 'cheer and invigorate you.' Surely I may say the same, if not more, of yours."

All this time the Prayer-meetings were continued in his tent at every opportunity; and, wearied and worn as he was after nights on picquet or in the trenches, frequently before he rested he was found in the hospital tent. "In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often," he became "in labours more abundant," and his work of love carried with it its own reward, even at the time, as we learn from his letter of the 15th of December, besides the blessed remembrance of the promise for the future, "Verily I say unto you, a cup of cold water given in my name shall in no wise lose its reward."

"*Camp before Sebastopol, Dec.* 15.

"On picquet the other night I was looking up at

the bright moon and stars, thinking of the power and love of Him who made them, and of the star in the East which 'came and stood where the young child lay,' and the Saviour's sorrows and sufferings from Bethlehem to Calvary passed in review before my mind. . . . This afternoon, whilst speaking to our poor fellows in the cholera hospital, who were lying cold and comfortless on the bare ground, rays of sunshine seemed to illumine that charnel tent as I brought the crucified Saviour before those men, for tears glistened in many an eye, and the smile of hope and peace was on many a lip. I feel it to be indeed a pleasure and a privilege to talk to my sick comrades and fellow-sinners of Jesus; and I am sure that they who never visit the suffering and dying deprive themselves of the deepest happiness this life affords. It is painful, often *heartrending*, to witness agony we cannot alleviate; to see the distorted face and hear the cry of anguish of friends and comrades. But it is sweet to be the bearer to them of glad tidings of joy and peace through the great Redeemer's atonement and love; and to see some of them gently falling asleep murmuring the life-restoring name of Jesus. *I have seen these, and I cannot find words to tell the delight* of hope which has then filled my breast. . . . The weather, which has been for three or four days fine and frosty, is now again damp and rainy; but I have got a pretty good tent, and the rain that does

find its way through the roof, is capital for drinking!

"You will be glad to hear that precious little book of hymns was a great comfort to one of my sick brother officers, Major Colville. I went to see him the night before last, and read him two or three. He seemed much delighted with them. Poor fellow! he was sent down yesterday to Balaklava. I do not expect to see him again in this world.*

"We are expecting every day to meet the enemy in open field or to storm the fortress. I wish they could go at it, at once. Be not anxious about me. I am safe in the arms of my Saviour—I *feel* it, I *know* it—in life or in death.

"*Dec.* 16, 17.—I have only returned about half an hour from the trenches of the advanced work, where we have been since half-past four o'clock this morning. The rain poured in torrents all night. We turned out in the midst of it (three officers and 200 men), and started for the rendezvous, where detachments from the several regiments assemble, previous to marching off together for the trenches. We had to ford two mountain torrents, which considerably damped our feet and legs, if not our ardour! When we reached the ground, the rest had gone on; so we followed as well as we could, tumbling in the mud at

* This amiable and excellent officer died at Scutari shortly afterwards, regretted by the whole regiment.

every step. We arrived at last opposite the 21-gun battery (Gordon's), and the rain having suddenly changed to snow, we presented rather a wintry appearance as we entered the covered way. This was, in parts, knee-deep in mud, through which we plodded, not without great exertion. As we cleared the way, we passed a poor fellow of the 77th Regiment, lying on the bank, wounded in the shoulder, and soon after we encountered a sharp fire of musketry, and a spent bullet struck me in the left side, but without doing me the slightest harm, thank God. I offered up a short prayer of gratitude and praise to my Heavenly Father who had thus preserved me. We lined the trench without any casualty, but the weather was so bleak and cold that we were obliged to walk about to keep ourselves warm, regardless of the bullets which kept flying about our ears like bees. A marine was mortally hit in the breast soon after, and I saw the poor fellow carried past on a stretcher. He died in less than half an hour. As one of my men was walking up and down close to the rampart, a minié ball hit him behind the ear. He fell on his side, and died without a groan. I buried him at dusk outside the trench. Poor Robert Turton! sudden and awful was thy death. *What* and *where* were thy last thoughts as death met thee in that short walk? The Russian sentries did not molest us whilst we were digging the grave, although they must have heard us

quite distinctly. We can hear them talking and coughing at their works.

"*Dec.* 17.—Another of my company died this afternoon. The regiment has now lost about sixty since we came here, and other regiments are losing in like proportion. There is great talk now about our *soon* going ahead to storm. I trust they will not delay much longer. I do not care in the least for fatigue and hardship myself, but it is sad and painful to lose one's comrades every day. Owing to the weather, we were unable to have Divine service today with the division, but several of us met together in the tent, and we shall again this evening, please God.

"On my return from the trenches last night, I found great comfort in reading the first chapter of the First Epistle of Peter, although, as soon as I had finished it, I went off to sleep like a top! The other night the Russians made a sortie on the French advanced batteries; we were turned out, but our gallant allies drove them back without our assistance. We had, however, a good view of the firing, which was kept up with a thundering roar, the glare making the sky look like a scroll of fire; it was kept up steadily for about two hours.

"I have great hopes for some amongst our poor sick fellows just sent to Balaklava, that they have cast themselves on the mercy of God in Christ. They

were so earnest to be read and talked to about Jesus Christ, and delighted in the hearing of free pardon and salvation through the blood of His cross.

"Forty have just been sent to Balaklava Hospital, out of our tents; but we shall soon have their places filled, if this weather continues. I never saw the men of my regiment so eager for religious instruction as they are now. God grant them to be numbered among His saints in glory everlasting.

"How glad I shall be to see the Soldiers' Missionary, Duncan Matheson! It will refresh and cheer my soul. Oh, that there were many more labourers in this harvest! Why are there not more Scripture-readers sent out? They are grievously wanted here. I am so longing that every soldier, before he dies, should be told of Jesus, made acquainted with all He has done for him; for many, I fear, are grossly ignorant of the way of salvation. There are very few chaplains left in the Crimea now; even if they all returned in health, it would be impossible for them to reach half the spiritual wants of the army. A staff of Scripture-readers would be invaluable to them,—men who would devote themselves to their work night and day."

TO HIS YOUNGEST SISTER.

"*Dec.* 21, 1854.

"... How strange it seems to me now, the

years when I lived without a 'Saviour near,'—a dark hideous blank! Thank God, darling Georgie, to your dying day, that you have been early brought to the 'feet of Jesus.' I am fully convinced that none have ever sinned more than I have against the God and Saviour who died to redeem me; but with my sins in clear remembrance, I am yet washed in 'the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness,' and 'looking unto Jesus,' I come 'boldly unto the throne of grace that I my obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.'

"'Come boldly to the throne of grace,
With all your wants and fears;
The Saviour's hand shall kindly chase
Away the bitterest tears.'

"And, trusting in the same kind and loving Saviour, 'mighty to save,' you too, dearest Georgie, can draw near with confidence, for 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin,' and an answer of peace you must and shall receive, for 'The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him.' Your prayers may appear at times to be no prayer at all, and at other seasons you may be tormented with vain and wandering thoughts; your faith weak and wavering; but, dearest sister, what then? Every Christian has to endure trials of this kind; the promise is sure, 'He giveth power to the faint.' 'They that wait

upon the Lord *shall* renew their strength.' In times of trouble, when everything seemed to be going against me, I have yet found the Cross of Jesus a sure refuge. What think you is it that sustains and supports me now, in the midst of all I have to endure, and with the knowledge that at any moment I may be summoned into the presence of God? Surely nothing but faith in a living Saviour. 'I know that Jesus died and rose again,' and that He has made, what I never could have done myself, full atonement and satisfaction for sins. What then have I to fear?

"When I take mine eyes from the crucified Saviour, I tremble, and am without hope. Any other stay will prove but a bruised reed. I have had to endure something of the reproach of the cross, as in short all must and will, who follow the Lord Jesus Christ. But I feel sure this moment, whilst I write, if I had not been given a firm persuasion in my heart and mind of the sufferings once endured by Jesus on Calvary, and by Divine grace been led to behold Him as the Lamb of God, the Saviour of sinners, and therefore of myself, I should long ere this have been the same, if not worse than in former years.

"Your outward forms of religion, whether in the shape of Popery or Tractarianism, may change the visible conduct of a man, but only a dying Saviour received into the heart can ever change the soul, and

make it pure and fit, through the power of the Holy Ghost, to dwell hereafter with Christ, and to enjoy the holy pleasures of heaven. Let us not hesitate to bear the Cross daily. Think of Him who bore the Cross for you. 'He was tempted in all points like as we are, although without sin.' . . . The glory of our religion is, Salvation through the blood of Jesus.

"Ever, my own beloved and much prayed-for sister,

"Your most attached and loving brother,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

"*Camp before Sebastopol, Dec.* 22.

"Thank you, dearest friend, for your affecting letter from Mrs Halkett's house.

"I grieve much to say that there is no hope left now that dear Halkett* might be a prisoner in Sebastopol; but I believe he is in the presence of his God, clothed in the spotless robe of his Redeemer's righteousness. The man who so loved the fourteenth of St John, *has found it all true for him.* I shall

* Major Douglas Halkett, 4th Light Dragoons, who fell in the flower of his age, in the charge at Balaklava. His thoughtful and benevolent character had won for him the name of "father of his regiment." Brave as he was gentle, his gallant bearing was noticed, even amidst the fury of that death-charge. The last time he was seen, was on the field, fearfully wounded, holding out some bank-notes to his men, with the characteristic words, "Take them for the wives and widows at home."

make the motto he chose for himself, my own; and if I am to fall too, I hope I may die with it on my lips,—'In God is my Salvation and my glory; the Rock of my strength and my Refuge is in God.'

"Give my love to his dear young wife; and tell her I pray God to comfort her. Her message went to my heart, with its confidence in my regard for her beloved husband. I know not whether I could have '*saved* him,' but I would have carried him to the rear, or died in the attempt. I have prayed that Jesus Himself would comfort her; I know He will.

"Yesterday I read with great comfort the third of Colossians, in the advanced work. I find Jesus more and more precious to my soul.

"The nights are very cold now, and that dear fur rug, when it arrives, will be most acceptable indeed. I will not disguise from you the truth, that we have to endure days and nights of hardships; but what are soldiers meant for? I *willingly* submit to them, and would to greater. Yet I cannot but feel, and deeply too, for the death of so many of my comrades; but I keep hope alive in my heart that many amongst them *died in Jesus* at the last. He is so tender and loving a Saviour, and so willing to hear poor sinners when they cry unto Him, that I believe He will not turn a deaf ear to the faintest sigh of a broken and contrite heart that may mount upwards

to the mercy-seat, even from the soldier who has longest trampled on His love and forbearance. I cherish this hope, and will, as long as I live.

"Whenever I am off duty, I visit the tents of the sick. They are full again, although forty were sent to Balaklava a few days ago. The weather is very wet and damp, with snow every now and then; but I am, thank God, as safe and sound as ever I was in my life. I feel persuaded that the Lord is keeping me for my L——'s sake and yours, in answer to your prayers.

"Bless you, my own mother, sister, friend, and counsellor, ever cheering and comforting my heart and soul. Give my warmest love to all around you, especially to your dearest, revered father. God bless him; and God bless also the beloved father of her I love best on earth, for his tenderness and solicitude for his darling child, and at the same time for his kindness to me.

"My love to your dear sister, Mrs Trench, and many thanks for her sweet hymn for Christmas-Day. Remember me most kindly to Mr B. Is he yet able to look to Jesus as his Saviour and Redeemer? Where would be *my* happiness now, if I could not do so, through the grace of God?"

"*Christmas-Day*, 1854.

"I am for out-lying picquet in ten minutes, so I

have but just time to wish you a happy Christmas; it is so bitterly cold I can scarcely hold my pen.

"I have enjoyed the day as much as could be expected, and partook of the Sacrament this morning, with (thank God!) thirty others.

"I received your precious letter of the 3d only a few minutes ago; thank you much for it.

"I trust the Protestant Members will speak out their minds, or rather those of their constituents, about the nuns, &c., when Parliament assembles. I feel very anxious about it.

"I hope you have received the letters which I write by every mail, such as they are.

"May our Father, the 'Father of all mercies,' keep us ever 'looking unto Jesus' our Saviour."

CHAPTER X.

The Day-star rises.

"JESUS in his heart,
Heaven in his eye,
And the world beneath his feet."

"The dawn of another life broke o'er his earthly horizon, as in the eastern sky the first faint streak of the morning."

A PARAGRAPH in the public press, early in the month of January 1855, conveyed the first intelligence that three officers had been found dead in their tents, from the effect of the fumes of charcoal, and that another was hanging between life and death. That other was Hedley Vicars.

He had returned to his tent chilled and weary, after a wild and snowy night in the trenches. Before throwing himself on his miserable bed of leaves and stones, he told his servant, as it was intensely cold, to make a small fire of charcoal in a dish, and to leave the door of the tent partially open, imagining that this would secure him from any injurious effect.

Providentially he was for out-lying picquet that afternoon. His servant, who had several times vainly endeavoured to awaken him, at last became alarmed, and went for the surgeon; he found him returning from the tent of another officer of the 97th, for whom, alas! his aid had come too late!

Hedley was carried into the open air, and laid on

the snow. His men stood round him, wringing their hands. Eagerly as brothers, tenderly as mothers, some assisted the medical officer in chafing with snow the body of him they loved, in the hope of restoring vitality. At length, after the severer measures of blistering and bleeding had been resorted to, consciousness returned. He was spared for a nobler end, to fulfil his own choice,—"As a soldier I will die!"

Three mails arrived in England, without any tidings of him,—a time, it need scarcely be said, of heart-sickening suspense to those who loved him; it was like life from the dead when tidings of his recovery came, in his own handwriting. A serious illness had followed the accident. During its continuance the kindest attentions were lavished on him both by officers and men, and he was nursed with devoted tenderness by Lieutenant Douglas Macgregor, with whom of late his friendship had been ripening into an affection almost brotherly.

With reference to his preservation, he thus writes, after a short account of the circumstances:—

"*January* 8, 1855.

"How I thank God that no one but myself slept in my tent that night; and surely I have cause to praise Him for His goodness in snatching me from the jaws of death. My first impulse, after raising my heart in

gratitude to that God who had preserved me, was to see whether my little picture was safe at my heart; it was there. I took a long, long look at the sweet face of her whose love has made summer of my gloomy winter; and thanked God again for having spared my life.

"*January* 12.—I have just returned from a night in the trenches, having come off the sick list yesterday morning. Last Sunday I was unable to leave my tent, but I had happy communion with Jesus in my solitude, and derived much pleasure from the fourteenth and fifteenth of St John. How true is the peace of mind that cleaving to Christ brings to a man! There is nothing like it in this world. How could I be happy now, if I had not the assurance that I have a Saviour in heaven, whose precious blood was once shed for me, and who now ever liveth to make intercession for me? I find more and more every day how little I can depend upon the feelings of my own heart towards Him; but my constant comfort is, that Jesus Christ is 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.'

"We are still on the heights before Sebastopol, but there we seem to be at a stand-still. Every-day reports are rife that something great is intended; but the days pass by, and nothing is done. Meanwhile the men are suffering much, chiefly from the difficulty of procuring firewood, — never plentiful, but now

scarcely to be got at, on account of the snow; and yet they bear up nobly under all their privations (which are far worse than those of their officers), and scarcely a murmuring word ever falls from their lips. The warm clothing has at length arrived, so the army is better off now in that respect. 6000 French troops reached the camp last week. They are close to us,—all such lively, cheery fellows, although their tents are even worse than ours, and their dress is very thin and light.

"*January* 26.—Owing to the rapidly-decreasing numbers of the British army, the duty in the trenches is now very severe. But whenever I feel inclined to repine, I turn my eyes to the sufferings of my Redeemer on Calvary, and soon forget my hardships, or count them as nothing. The day before yesterday, when I was in the trenches, I seated myself on a gun-carriage, and read with great comfort the first of Ephesians. My thoughts dwelt chiefly on those few cheering words, 'ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED.' Oh, what a healing balm there is here for a weary, heavy-laden sinner! How I long to have my heart ever alive to the soul-wants of my fellow-sinners, and to be unceasing in my exertions to win them to Jesus through the mighty power of the Holy Spirit! I am much better, but have not got back my strength. During my illness I was very happy, but for some days past my heart has seemed cold and dead. Yet

I trust brighter hours are again dawning on my soul. What a lonely, gloomy time it is when Jesus withdraws the light of His countenance; but at *all* times I can and do trust in His love and tenderness; and I feel persuaded He is in mercy sending me this trial of faith to draw me nearer to himself.

"I have met Captain Vandeleur, of the Artillery, two or three times since I last wrote, and most delightful have those meetings been. My spirit has been refreshed by them. . . . . He is coming to our camp every Sunday for prayer and Scripture-reading. Yesterday was the Sabbath, and I enjoyed it much. I prayed with the sick in hospital, and distributed several of the prayers. The poor fellows liked them so much; many of them read them before I left the tent. Some of us met for prayer in the morning, during which time a heavy firing was kept up. This, no doubt, would have rather interrupted a congregation at home, but we are quite used to it now.

"*February* 1.—The weather has been very fine the last three days. You cannot imagine in England what an influence this has on the spirits of all out here. I heard merry songs in the tents to-night. We expected an attack yesterday, but the enemy changed his mind. I had a very happy day notwithstanding."

TO HIS MOTHER.

"My own dearest Mother,—I just take this hurried opportunity of writing you a few lines, to tell you that, thank God! I am safe and well. The weather has been delightful for the last two or three days, although there has been a sharp frost morning and evening. The warm clothing has arrived, so we are all jolly and comfortable. I have been very weak since my illness, and unable to write, otherwise you may be sure, dearest mother, I should not have kept silence so long. There is positively nothing stirring here. Strong firing is kept up at intervals; but with this exception, one might really doubt whether we were in an enemy's country. The hospitals are still full, and many poor fellows die every week; but I trust we have seen the worst. The Chaplain of our Division has gone to England invalided, and there is no one to take his place, so we have no service for sick or well: but I mean to ask the Colonel whether I may read in the hospital next Sunday. You will be glad, precious mother, when I tell you that, although there have been cloudy seasons for my soul, I have generally been enabled to rely on the faithfulness of Jesus; and I find such comfort in looking only to Him and trusting in His intercession and atoning blood. Oh! darling mother, how lonely I

feel when Jesus withdraws himself from me, and leaves me for a time to myself; but those blessed words in Isaiah have often restored happiness to my soul—'For a small moment I have forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.' I enjoy the presence of Jesus often now, and when He is near me I feel happy and peaceful. May He become more precious to our souls each day, and may our hearts be changed gradually more and more after His likeness.

"God bless and keep you all. Give my best love to my dear grandmother, and tell her I remember her in my prayers."

"*Sunday, February* 11.

"It is now eight o'clock, at night, and I take up my pen to write to one whose letters always arouse me to think less of self, and more of Jesus and of the many dying sinners around me. May His presence ever refresh your own soul, giving you an earnest of those bright joys which are at God's right hand for evermore. This day of rest has nearly closed. Alas! there is but little perceptible difference between the Lord's-day and other days, here; and yet I love its return, and never feel so peaceful and joyous as on this heavenly day. Owing to the roughness of the

weather, there was no service for the Division; but some of us met as usual in one of the tents, to raise our hearts in prayer and praise to our Heavenly Father. After the morning meeting, I went to read and pray with the sick in hospital, and to distribute your new supply of books and tracts (with those sent by the Miss Leycesters, for which thank them with my kindest regards), and the blessed cards of prayer, for which the poor fellows are most eager. Oh! it is enough to make one's heart bleed to see, in one hospital after another, men dying without any kind friend or faithful minister to direct their hearts to the words of heavenly mercy, to point them to Jesus, and to refresh their souls by the water of life. But I do and will hope that many who have gone to their last home from this dreary camp are now before the Lamb, clothed with white robes. It is so great a comfort to believe this,—and why should it not be true? May not many a broken and contrite heart, drawn by a dying Saviour's love to make known its wants to Him, and to lean its hopes of pardon and eternal life on the blood of the Cross, have received the answer of peace direct from the mercy-seat (where, thank God! Jesus ever pleads)—'Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

"I hear much of a Chaplain at Balaklava—Mr Hayward—a man of devoted piety, who *lives* to win souls to Christ. He is universally respected and beloved.

"I have now before me your letter of the 26th, with its mention of past distress and present thankfulness to God for having spared my life. I could scarcely read it all, for tears. May God shower His best blessings upon each of you for all your love to me! Will you tell all who have kindly prayed for me and given thanks for my preservation, in Beckenham and elsewhere, that I am deeply grateful for their Christian love. How thankful I am that L—— heard it first from you, before she saw it in the 'Times.'

"How uneasy you must have felt, when you read in that interesting soldier's letter, that he hoped God would accept *his own* sufferings and the sufferings of his blessed Saviour in atonement for his sins, when 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin.' God grant he may see that the way to join the blessed company who are arrayed with white robes and palms in their hands, is to wash his robes and make them white *in the blood of the Lamb*. Oh! may he and multitudes of the British army shew themselves, in the last great fight, good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and conquer through Him who loved them, and died for them, and washed away their sins in His own precious blood. Although I have often cause to grieve for my backwardness and slothfulness in the cause of Christ, *yet* my heart yearns over the souls of those who have not fled to the cleansing fountain of

His blood for pardon and peace; and often, on rising from my knees, I have felt so powerfully drawn by the love of Christ that I have been almost on the point of going out through the camp, to endeavour to impart to others the ground of my own peace and happiness. But then, too often, when face to face with those whom I know I shall meet at the last great day, has my courage failed and my tongue been silent. May God forgive me for the many times I have thus acted the coward, and been ashamed of Jesus, my dearest Friend, and Saviour, and King."

"*Late at night, February* 16.—The camp is hushed in sleep, and nothing is to be heard save the occasional booming of artillery and rattle of musketry, or the rumbling of ammunition-waggons on their way to the batteries from Balaklava. I own to being rather tired after the duties of the day; but were I an hundred times more so, I could not rest till I have written to you in answer to your two last most precious letters. . . . . .

"You ask my opinion as to our prospects. Do not believe for a moment that I take the gloomy view of matters which so many of the newspapers take. No! Although I have seen many a noble soldier laid low for ever, and regiments reduced to less than half their numbers by sickness since the 20th of last November, *I have no fear of the eventual result, by the help of God.* The French have a large army in the Crimea (80,000

or 90,000 men), and more regiments arriving every week. And what with these and 12,000 British, we are well able to defeat any Russian army Menschikoff or any of his generals may bring into the field against us. As to taking Sebastopol, that will be an affair of several months. But the warm weather will soon be coming now, and then day and night duty in the trenches will be rather good fun than otherwise. So cheer up, my own beloved friend and comforter. *You* have cheered *us* by telling us of the hope that a day of prayer is about to be granted. A great answer must and will follow; for does not Jesus himself say, 'If (even) two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven?' May God the Holy Spirit pour abundantly upon all who shall bend the knee on that day the spirit of grace and supplication!

"God bless you, dearest and best of all my earthly friends, for all your care for the bodily and spiritual comfort of me and my regiment. The two boxes sent in December have arrived, and their contents are invaluable. How kind of that lady at Torquay to cut up her own fur cloak into chest-preservers for us soldiers! When they arrive, will it not be a sort of sacrilege to wear them? I should like to send my Christian love to her, and to those who meet with her to pray for us. Also, do not fail to give it to Mrs Harrington. Tell her *the needle-books, with scissors,*

&c., will be capital presents. I cordially appreciate her sympathy for us in not calling it by the good old name of '*housewife*,' which would indeed have been a mockery of the miseries of a camp. . . . . I am afraid one of my late letters, written rather in a desponding frame of mind (partly arising, perhaps, from a good deal of exertion whilst I was still very weak), will distress and make you anxious. I would not willingly cause you one moment's pain or uneasiness. I am now quite well and strong again, thank God! and full of peace and joy in my soul.

"I had another visit this evening from Mortimer Lovell. The duties of private soldiers are so heavy now that I hardly thought he would have come here again so soon from his distant part of the camp; and I don't believe he would, but for your blessed letters to him, which he had left behind with me, and I know *I* would have gone any distance rather than have lost one of them. I took him into my excavated abode, and we sat together by the fire for upwards of an hour. I really believe him to be now a true-hearted, humble-minded Christian. He told me of his having distributed the cards of prayer and tracts which I gave him to the patients in the hospital tents, and that they were very glad to get them. He said that he often went to read by the bedside of the sick and dying, and he considered it a privilege to do so. We read the first chapter of the First Epistle of St Peter, and

prayed together before parting. He said he had Christian fellowship with a man named Bush in his regiment, whom he believes to be walking with God. He was one of your navvies of Beckenham. Of course you hear from him sometimes; but a testimony of this sort, not intended for you, is very satisfactory."

"*Sunday night*, 18*th*.—This has been a bright and happy day, in every sense of the words. We had divine service (as usual in fine weather) near the Guards' encampment, but the Chaplain was not there, so there was no sermon. We therefore had our little service in the tent soon afterwards, and a few of us read and prayed together again this evening. My mansion is much more comfortable for this purpose since I excavated it; there is more room in it, and it is warmer. I have a fireplace now (what do you think of that?) which only smokes two or three times a-day, a small chair I bought at Balaklava, a little table made out of the bottom of an old cask; and as for my bed, with the depth of *that fur!*—why it is the envy of all who see it! And, although others beat me in having bedsteads and double tents, I think *my house* now the most comfortable in the camp; at all events, it *will* be when the candle-stove arrives. I shall never be in want of visitors then."

"*February* 21.—One hurried line, to say the *great box* from Terling has arrived at length, including

yours and L——'s. I cannot tell you what pleasure it gave me distributing the various things amongst the men,—they seemed so grateful and delighted; and I am sure you will all have the blessings and prayers of many. Groups of them collected outside the tents to read the hymns and tracts tacked so enticingly to the comforters and cuffs. What will you say to my theft? As Mr Huleatt is gone to Scutari, I took the warm flannels for the sick, which you had addressed to him, into my own possession, and carried them to the hospitals; and if you had seen the grateful looks, it would have done your hearts good.

"Give my best regards to your cousins, Mrs and Miss Austen, and thank them for their kind gifts for the men. And do not forget to tell the servants at the Rectory how much I valued their contributions (which quite affected me as I took them out for distribution). Nares has sent me a box of useful articles, with several Testaments; also a tin of ready-ground (!) coffee, which was highly acceptable. Little Kate's *satisfactory* present—of not *warm*, but *hot* stockings—truly amused me. May God bless the dear child and the sweet young sister who is so soon to leave England!

"Who do you think brought up with his own hands your last parcel of books and prayers? Duncan Matheson! He sat in my tent some time, and we

enjoyed sweet communion for nearly an hour, and, before leaving, he prayed with me. Surely it may be said of him, he is 'a temple of the Holy Ghost.' I feel still the blessing of that visit in my soul."

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Camp before Sebastopol, Feb.* 19, 1855.

"My own darling Mother,—The long expected box has at length arrived, and its contents are now safely stowed away in my tent; and as the various proofs of loving remembrance from you, dearest mother, and from darling Clara, Mary, Georgie, and the children, met my eyes, I was so much affected that I nearly cried. The things you have sent me are just what I wanted.

"I intend distributing the comforters, &c., to my men, to-morrow; and I shall let them know who sent them, that you and my darling sisters may not lose their prayers. Thank you, my own most precious mother, for your affectionate remembrance of your son. This has been a delightful day. I took a short walk with one of my brother officers, to have a look from the height near which the Guards are encamped, rather to the right of us, at the valley of the Tchernaya. Seldom have I seen a more beautiful view. The valley extends three or four miles across, from our advanced posts to the Russian position on the opposite side. It is partly under water now, but the

enemy do not trust to that to prevent our making a nearer acquaintance with them, for I could plainly perceive, through a glass, a Cossack vidette on the look-out near the stream, and I believe swarms of them occasionally come down into the plain.

"As I gazed on the magnificent scenery, on the wildness and grandeur of the distant lofty and snow-capped mountains, giving an additional charm to the surrounding loveliness, all around was so still and calm, that my thoughts wandered to more peaceful climes, and to that not far distant day, when Jesus shall return to this beautiful, although sin-marred world, when wars shall cease for ever, and love and holiness fill the breasts of His redeemed people. Oh, dearest mother, there are times when I *long* for this final consummation of all things. What a blessed thing it will be to serve Christ, with a heart wholly renewed and made like unto His, when sin can no more afflict us with its presence, or bow us down under its intolerable burden. But it is not always thus that my soul longs and pants for that great advent of my glorious and precious Saviour. Oh that I were *ever* waiting and ready to welcome Him, on His triumphant return to a world, where once 'He took upon Him the form of a servant,' to redeem and save sinners!

"May He give me grace to bear His cross, and to follow Him daily, be the way smooth or rough. I

have often reason to grieve that my love for my Saviour is so small. But then *His* love 'passeth knowledge;' and in looking unto Him, and taking refuge at His cross, I find *sure* safety, rest, and peace.

"On my return to my tent, who should I find there but Mr Duncan Matheson, the soldiers' missionary from Balaklava. He remained with me for about an hour, and I do not think I ever enjoyed a more heavenly conversation than with this man of God. We read the third chapter of Ephesians, and he prayed with me. When he left, I saw that three of my brother officers were standing close by; they must have heard that fervent prayer. Who knows but that one of them may be led to pray for himself to-night; God grant it! One of those three said to me the other day, when I was in his tent, 'Vicars, I dreamt about you the other night, and I thought you were speaking to me about religion.' 'Well, did you like it?' I said. 'Yes, very much,' he replied. May the Lord give me courage to speak faithfully and earnestly, and bless my feeble words to his soul's good, for Jesus' sake."

TO LADY RAYLEIGH.

"*Camp before Sebastopol, Feb.* 23, 1855.

"My own most beloved Sister,—A thousand thanks for the welcome presents of warm clothing, &c. we have at length received. Everything I have

yet seen, is just what I wanted, even to the marmalade from darling little Clara, and Dick's and Charley's gifts. How kind of dear Edward to think of getting a fur-coat for me! I shall write to him as soon as it reaches me safe and sound. I told the men to whom they were chiefly indebted for them, and doubt not you will have the prayers of many grateful hearts offered up for you. I shall write to dearest Mary and Georgie by the next mail, to thank them for their share in the gifts. All my company are now, thanks to your kindness, well supplied with everything requisite to keep out the cold, and as the long boots for the troops have at last been issued, we are in want of nothing. How nice of the villagers to work for the Terling soldiers! Many thanks for the books you sent me. We were much in want of sermons for our Sunday tent-services. I have already read several pages of Mr Walker's memoir, and like it exceedingly. Oh! that I had, like him, more of the 'mind that was in Christ Jesus;' that the motive of my *every* action were love to Jesus, and a desire to promote His glory and hasten His kingdom! I want to forget *self*, and ever to bear in mind that I have been bought with a price, that I should glorify God in my body and my spirit, which are His. I want to have more zeal and energy in the Redeemer's cause, and greater love for the souls He died to save; and whilst thus labouring in the vineyard of the Lord, I want to have

a stronger and more realising faith in the *blood of the Cross;* to be 'clothed with humility,' that I may never rest upon anything I can do, but ever, as a lost and miserable sinner, look to Jesus alone for salvation. May He be 'formed in us,' the only 'hope of glory!' May He continually dwell in our hearts, and 'fill us with joy and peace in believing!'

"I have seen my old friend Cay, of the Coldstream Guards, several times, and have enjoyed delightful Christian converse with him. I gave him several of dearest ——'s cards of prayer, and when I went on Sunday to the Guard's Hospital, I observed one fastened to each bed. It made me glad to see weary and dying eyes resting on the words, 'O GOD, WASH ME FROM ALL MY SINS IN MY SAVIOUR'S BLOOD, AND I SHALL BE WHITER THAN SNOW. FILL ME WITH THE HOLY GHOST, FOR JESUS CHRIST'S SAKE.' Oh that they may all pray it from their hearts!

"I gave the little book of Psalms to poor Longley of the band, who is very ill, and I took him also some biscuits, for which he seemed very grateful. I have long believed him to be a follower of the Lamb; and his uniform good conduct has borne testimony to his heart having been changed and renewed by Divine grace. I rejoice to think he can rely upon the love of his Saviour, even in these hours of pain and weakness. . . . . Cousin Ned has not yet returned from Scutari; poor fellow, he has suffered severely.

"God bless you, my own most precious sister. —Ever your most tenderly attached brother,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

TO HIS YOUNGEST SISTER.

"*February* 25.

"Having had no less than six letters to write by the last mail, I was unable then to express to you, my own dearest Georgie, how pleasant it was to me, on opening the large box, to find proofs of *your* love amidst those of others. Many thanks for them, darling, and for the 'bag of sundries,' which contained many useful articles which only a thoughtful dear little sister like yourself would have thought of. . . . . Have you not reason to bless God for the illness you speak of, if it has been the means of leading you nearer to Jesus—near to God through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, of revealing to you somewhat of the worth and beauty of the Saviour to your soul, and of giving you a hope full of immortality through His cross: Surely these are blessings for which you ought never to be tired of praising our God and Saviour. I should like to hear you exclaim with thankful delight—

"'Oh for a thousand tongues, to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!'

"It is true that our feelings are variable. We have not always the same glorious views of Jesus, the same assurance of our sins having been washed out, and our persons accepted, through the blood shed on the cross. But let us endeavour to seek for comfort in Christ, and in His precious promises. Viewing ourselves as vile and sinful, let us look to Jesus as our perfect holiness, and as our complete Deliverer from sin, and death, and hell. Thus shall we find peace, not in *feeling ourselves* to be good and holy, but in hourly acknowledging our wretchedness, and casting our sins upon the Saviour, and receiving out of His fulness grace for grace. Strive, then, to cultivate a spirit of praise, my own darling Georgie; you have no idea how much happiness and cheerfulness it will bring you. God bless you and fill you with all joy and peace in believing!—Ever your most tenderly attached and affectionate brother,

"HEDLEY."

"*February* 28.

"By the dim light of a very inferior tallow candle, I sit down to say, the stove is come! Never was there anything so charming. I have thrown it open to my company for cooking. It came faster than any package has yet travelled,—by Sir M. Peto's ship. How very kind of Mr Wilberforce Baynes to get it sent, and so expeditiously; it was dropped at my

very tent-door, without my having to make the smallest effort to get it. And what a delightful store of books you and Miss Maitland have sent! Give my love to her; and tell her what pleasure it gives me to give them away. Nearly every officer in the regiment has got one. I thought some would have declined, but they all accepted them most gladly. I went to the hospital, and distributed several copies of that beautiful little book, 'Come to Jesus.' I gave one of Ryle's hymn-books to Longley, of the band, and another to Mortimer Lovell; and I am making a *tour* round the hospitals of other regiments, to carry cards of prayer for each. Thank your beloved sister for her supply of them and for her precious letter, which I hope to answer. And thank dearest Louie for her charming sketch of Beckenham Church and Rectory. How often have I, whilst looking at them, thought of the calm, heavenly hours I have enjoyed there.

"'How sweet their memory still!'

Well, the time may soon arrive when I shall enjoy them again; when we shall take sweet counsel together, and walk to the house of God in company, and tell our fellow-sinners of pardon and peace through the atoning blood of a crucified Saviour.

"Oh! that the Lord God would come amongst us with a 'high hand and with a stretched-out arm;'

that He would, by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, change and soften the hard hearts of those who despise the riches of His grace, and who make a mock at sin, whilst standing on the verge of eternity; that He would implant the rose of Sharon, in all its freshness and fulness, on the ground of every troubled, sin-laden heart! I cannot but believe that many *have* died in peace and hope, for I have heard from the lips of several, in dying hours, that their only hope was through the mercy of Him who died on the cross. But it grieves me when I look around and see how few, very few, there are amongst the *yet* strong and healthy (who may, in a moment, be numbered with the dead) who shew any love for Jesus; but it is only through sovereign grace that *we* have beheld the Lamb crucified *for us*, and have been brought to rejoice in Him who 'purchased us with his own blood,' with 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.' Knowing, as I do, the sin-stained course of my past life, and how utterly undeserving I was of being an object of God's pardoning mercy, I never despair of even the foremost in the ranks of Satan being brought to the feet of Jesus; and when I see one, for whose conversion I have prayed, becoming more hardened in sin, I comfort myself with the thought, that 'grace led *my* roving feet to tread the heavenly road;' and the same constraining power may, at any moment, convince him of sin, and reveal Jesus to his soul.

"*March* 2.—This has been a very cold day. I went to the Light Division tents this morning, and gave away several of the tracts and cards of prayer at each of the hospitals, and shall go this evening, or to-morrow, please God, to distribute them amongst the sick of the Second Division.

"How grieved I am for poor Mrs Halkett in this second trial. It is, indeed, hard for one that has been so tried to submit without a murmur to the will of God, but if she could see the happiness of her child now, she would not wish to have it back again. That beloved infant has gone to join its father, and all three, father, mother, and child, will ere long be united, never again to be separated. Pray give her my Christian love. I hope her little girl is well.

"Yesterday was a peaceful, happy day to my soul. We had two meetings for prayer and Scripture-reading in my tent. Besides our own little company, we had two officers of the Artillery, Capt. Anderson and Capt. Vandeleur, and two of the Guards, Capt. Le Couteur and Dr Cay. The church was rather too small to accommodate so many comfortably, but we managed very well, and had a blazing fire the whole time; there is luxury for you!

"The Guards are gone to Balaklava, now. Poor fellows, they are much reduced; the whole brigade mustering barely 250 men fit for duty. But although

few are left, and those worn and haggard, they look such noble undaunted fellows."

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Camp before Sebastopol,*
"*March* 5, 1855.

"My own darling Mother,—I am on regimental duty to-day, and for the trenches this evening. This is a lovely *summer's* day, but, then, to-morrow it may be snowing, for you have no idea how changeable the climate is here. I am, thank God, safe and well in both body and soul. I never was in the enjoyment of better health, and the Lord continues to favour me with the sunshine of His presence, filling me with peace and joy in Jesus. Oh! darling mother, how precious I find the Saviour to be to me in these perilous times,—with what trust and confidence can I place myself, both for time and eternity, beneath the shelter of His cross! How the knowledge of the love of Christ (that He bled for us) nerves the heart to bear patiently, if not willingly, all the trials and troubles which God may send us, and which we are sure to meet with, sooner or later, in this world of tears: but what comfort religion brings to the soul in leading us to *forget* the sorrows of the present in the bright contemplation of a future world; and how joy-

ous, how light the heart, and how indifferent to all else, when Christ reveals Himself to our souls in the precious character of our dearest Friend and Brother! With Him near, to cheer and assure us, we can 'reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.' And, although clouds sometimes hover between Him and us, yet we know that He has promised 'never to leave or forsake us.' I will now give you a few extracts from my Journal:—

"*February* 27.—This has been the hottest day we have had yet,—quite an English June day. Gave several of the books away, from the Beckenham-box, to my brother officers. Took a long walk with Lieut. Cannon in the evening; we talked on religious subjects, and especially on the uncertainty of life. Oh! may we both prepare to meet our God, whenever He shall summon us hence! The French fired several rockets from the Victoria Redoubt on the town.

"28*th*.—A cloudy day, but the rain kept up until the afternoon. I went out for a walk with Harmond, but we were obliged to return. Went to the hospital, and gave away several tracts to the patients,—amongst them a number of 'Come to Jesus.' Oh! that the Holy Ghost may lead many to find peace and rest in the Saviour! I took some jam (thanks to dear John) and biscuit to one of my company, John Carthy, for which the poor fellow was most grateful,

although so weak and ill he could scarcely see me. Gave away some hymn-books of Ryle's to men of the band. Gave away several little books to my company.

"*March* 1.—Remained in tent, writing, in the morning,—a bitter cold day. Poor Carthy, of my company, died in hospital last night, and was buried to-day. Cay came to see me, but I was unable to go for a walk with him, owing to parade. Dined off beef-steak and porter! Had tea with Desmond and Burton. Read a chapter, and retired to rest about half-past eleven o'clock. O Lord, do thou, in thy great mercy, keep me from forgetting what Thou hast suffered for me in body and soul. May I never be drawn by the cares of this life from Jesus, my Friend and Saviour; but may I daily live closer to His cross. Above all, would I ask Thee to fill me with the Holy Ghost!

"2*d March*.—A cold and snowy day. Borrowed Smith's horse, and rode over to the Light Division, with my pockets full of tracts, books, and cards of prayer, which I gave away to the sick of the 23d, 33d, 34th, and Rifle Brigade. Cay came in the evening, and we sallied off together to the camp of the Second Division, where we distributed several more to the 41st, 49th, and 62d Regiments. We then called on Vandeleur, of the Artillery. He was not at home. We sat in his tent for nearly an hour. I

read aloud the thirteenth of Hebrews,—took tea with Porter and Cannon.

"*3d March.*—Having invited Cay to dinner to-day, I despatched my servant Keating to Balaklava for some fresh meat and flour (to make a pudding). Took a stroll in the morning with one of my brother officers (Lieut. Goodenough), towards the Third Division, and again in the afternoon towards the Victoria Redoubt.

"We dined at five o'clock, off baked mutton and potatoes (done in the candle stove dearest —— sent me), and soup, plum-pudding, bread, cheese, and a bottle of porter. We afterwards spent a most pleasant evening together. I read a little tract called 'Believe and Live,' and then the fortieth of Isaiah. After conversing on them, we offered up a short prayer. May the Lord bless these meetings together to our eternal good, and to the glory and honour of Jesus Christ! Heavy firing this evening.

"*4th March, Sunday.*—Had Divine service in camp. We afterwards met together in a tent. All present. Then sat on a Regimental Board; after which I went to the Guards' camp for Cay, and we then went laden with tracts, books, and prayers to the remaining hospitals of the Second Division, where we distributed all we had. Had service in our hospital tent on my return, and prayed with one of the sick, particularly, who asked me to do so, with tears in his eyes.

Poor fellow, he was much oppressed with the weight of sins on his conscience. I spoke to him of, and directed him to 'look to Jesus,' the Saviour. Service in the tent again in the evening. Seven present. Afterwards took a short walk with Vandeleur, Craigie, and Anderson, of the Engineers. Read and prayed with Major Ingram and Lieutenant Derman, in the latter's tent. Oh, what a happy day this has been! 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.' Had a conversation with a private of the 77th Regiment for an hour after dinner. Dear —— was the means, in God's hands, of bringing him to a knowledge of the truth. Oh, dearest mother, how many will rise up and bless her at the last day! I must now conclude, as I must get ready for the trenches. We have had rather light work lately; but we expect it will begin again soon, as at first; but I am quite happy. Dearest mother, I have begun to keep a journal, as you see. But I can but scribble a little in it every night.

"Give my best love to dearest Clara, Mary, and Georgie. You are all constantly in my thoughts and prayers. Love to Lord Rayleigh, to John, and Miss Strutt, &c. Tell dear Edward, with my love, I will strive to write him a letter by the next mail, if I can. *God bless you*, my own most precious, darling mother.

"Ever your most warmly attached

"And devoted son,

"HEDLEY."

TO MISS VICARS.

"*Camp before Sebastopol,*
"*Sunday night, March* 11, 1855.

"My own darling Mary,—I must write a few lines before I go to bed, as the mail closes to-morrow; and I shall have plenty to do then, as we expect to shift our ground early in the morning. For myself, I don't care much about it (though, of course, one does *a little!*), but I do feel for the sick, many of whom are now in nice wooden huts, and will have to revert to tents again, at any rate, until we get the former on the new ground upon which we are to encamp.

"After our usual tent services, I walked with Cay and Vandeleur towards the Victoria Redoubt. The Light Division formerly furnished a picquet here, but the French have it now. From the advanced work in front of the redoubt we got a capital view of Sebastopol, with its long line of frowning batteries. We soon perceived that our enemies had erected a new work in front of their Round Tower Battery, and considerably nearer to us, for the purpose of enfilading the Gordon. We could trace where each shot or shell fell. I am glad to say that their practice was very bad, for out of about fifty rounds which they fired while we were looking on, only one or two hit the

battery. I only hope they may be as ignorant of the range when we storm!

"On our return, we learnt that a strong party from the Light Division is to be detained on duty to night, in the trenches, in addition to the usual guards. We have 300 men of the 97th out to-night; so we have only forty or fifty effective men left in camp. Three Captains, besides Subalterns of the 97th, are either on covering party or out-lying picquet. I have a night in bed, for my comfort.

"I have enjoyed this day very much. . . . . We met twice in the tent for prayer; and in the evening I read and prayed with Ingram and Derman. 'Gibson's Sermons' have come in most opportunely for our church; they all like them very much. This evening's text was Isaiah xliv. 3, 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.' Thanks be unto God for this precious promise: is it not equivalent to the words of Jesus on the mount, 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled?' Let us ever be waiting on the Lord for fresh supplies of grace, and earnestly and perseveringly pray for a more abundant outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Good night, my own darling Mary. May God for ever bless you, lift up the light of His countenance upon you, and give you peace! . . . .

"*March* 12.—Well, dearest Mary, we are to remain

where we are till the day after to-morrow; this respite is in consequence of the rains which fell yesterday. Did I tell you of my charming stove, with its portable fuel of cocoa-nut oil-cakes, which, when lighted, throws out a great heat? My servant has already twice baked in it small flour-cakes,—hot for my breakfast, besides cooking my dinner in the same way, for a change.

"How delighted I am you are going to Beckenham at Easter, God willing! Well do I remember my happy hours there! Never did I feel so strongly that I was in a place where 'prayer was wont to be made,' as in that dear Rectory.

"I have had a beautiful letter from Mrs Ovens, which I hope to reply to by this or next mail. Also to one from Mr Smelt, of Canterbury, curate to Mr Stephenson, author of that beautiful book, 'Christ on the Cross.' Also from Mr Rigley, the Chobham missionary, who prayed with me by the tent-pole, when I was on guard there, one day.

"Give my best and fondest love to dearest mother, and to darling Clara and Georgie. Much love to all. Let us ever have our hope set, and our eyes fixed on JESUS; and then, whatever happens me, we shall surely meet in peace and joy.—Ever, my own precious darling sister, your most deeply affectionate and attached brother,

"HEDLEY."

From his correspondence with one to whom the deepest recesses of his heart were opened, a single passage is permitted to appear in these pages, because it illustrates that he was as loyal in his allegiance to his Queen and to his country as to the heart he had sought and won:—

"How I long for that which I am sure will come eventually—a victorious ending to this war! I wish we might go at Sebastopol at once, for I am growing tired of this delay; and, if the truth were told, I fear my military ardour is giving way to my deep longing to see your face again. But I cannot see how the Allied Powers *can agree* to peace until the stronghold which has so long withstood us, falls into our hands. Therefore, as the honour of my Queen and my country is involved in this matter, not even to return to you, dearest, would I leave the Crimea, save through the harbour of Sebastopol."

HIS LAST LETTER.

". . . . . Your letter of the 18th contained no small comfort for me. I bless God that my sweetest L—— is with her more than mother again, to be comforted in these dark days. . . . . My own mother, no less than hers, how I have blessed you in my heart, since the day I could call her mine, for all your love to us

both! I was grieved to hear that your beloved and revered father had been ill. God grant his most precious life may long be spared to us and to the Church of God. Tell him, with my best love, that I have distributed amongst my brother officers his delightful 'Invitation to United Prayer for the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit,' and I trust that it may lead several to turn their thoughts and minds to the contemplation of those things that belong to their peace. Major Ingram is one of my best friends, and a *true* Christian. I have known both him and his dear wife for many years. We have often prayed, and read, and held communion together. Douglas Macgregor is very dear to me. He is very young, and full of high spirits, which might now and then carry him away, were he not continually seeking to have more and more of the mind of Christ; and, in these solemn scenes, his thoughts turn oftener heavenward. Do not cease to pray for him, and for my subaltern, Lieut. Brinkley (for whom I have a real affection), that they may both be good and fearless soldiers of Jesus Christ. Macgregor is the officer I mentioned, who asked, some weeks ago, to be my companion in visiting the hospitals, adding, with characteristic ingenuousness, 'I have just been reading those words, "I was sick, and ye visited me not," and I should not like my Saviour to be saying those words to *me*.' . . . . The weather is quite warm,

with bright sunshine, so we are throwing off our winter clothing. I am sorry to say we are to be removed from our present ground to where the Light Division is encamped; but soldiers ought not to grumble at inconveniences. Yesterday, I visited the hospitals, and read the twelfth of Hebrews, and prayed with a poor dying man, who beckoned me to do so when I was at the other end of the ward. He was low and wretched; but he seemed comforted when I spoke to him of that 'blood which cleanseth from all sin,' and told him of the dying love of Jesus. I do hope that he and I shall meet in heaven, clothed in white robes.

"Nothing new here. Report says that the Czar is dead! Can it be true? Sickness is on the decrease, and we are all as lively as kittens.

"*March* 16.—Many, many thanks, for your dear letter of the 1st. I cannot tell you how much I rejoice in the improved accounts of the Duke of Manchester, for your last had made me very uneasy about him. God grant that he may be long spared to his sweet wife, to England, and to the Church at large!

"We have lately lost several men in the trenches. On Wednesday last, Captain Craigie, of the Engineers, who regularly attended our Sabbath prayer-meetings, was killed by a shell in the Middle Ravine. I was on picquet there on that night, and he was struck only a few minutes before I came up with my men. Poor fellow! he was quickly called into eter-

nity, for he never spoke a word, but fell instantly after being hit; but I feel sure he was READY, and is now safe for ever! I liked him very much, and his death has cast a gloom over our small band.

"We were turned out the night before last, by a very heavy firing in our front; it lasted for about twenty minutes, when it ceased entirely, but ere long we were again alarmed by a second cannonade, and we once more stood to our arms. It was a fine starlight night, and, as I stood gazing in the direction of the fusillade, I thought I had never witnessed a more imposing spectacle. Shells in quick succession were shooting up into the air, with the bright glare of artillery reflected over the brow of the hills in our front, and the lurid flashes of musketry, as volley after volley chimed in, accompanied by the wild cheers of the combatants, which we could plainly hear at intervals, even amidst the deafening roar. In less than half an hour, all was quiet, and we returned to our tents. It was an attack made by the French on a Russian advanced work, from which they drove the enemy, but were in their turn driven out. The French had 200 killed and wounded; and the Rifles lost eleven men. We are anxiously expecting our batteries to open in good earnest; but they say there is not quite enough shell or shot up yet. Nothing could be more favourable than the weather has been lately, and the roads are in capital condition. My love to your

beloved father, and sister, and brother-in-law, to Mrs M——, and to dear Louie. I inclose a letter to my *own* L——. God bless you, my own most beloved mother-sister. How delighted I am that you told me the day which is appointed for national prayer! We shall keep it in the camp too, please God. Jesus is *near*, and very precious to my heart and soul. May He ever be to you also, my own second mother!— Ever your most warmly attached son and brother,

"HEDLEY VICARS."

On the Sabbath which followed—his last on earth —he seemed to have climbed, like Moses, the Mount whence the promised land is seen; and to have caught the twilight dawn of the Eternal Sabbath so near at hand. Amidst unceasing work for his Master, he entered at the same time, in his mortal measure, "into the joy of his Lord." A serene happiness filled his soul as he went, in the intervals between the tent services, with the message of peace to the hospitals of other regiments. The morning service was conducted in Major Welsford's hut, where the usual number assembled. In the afternoon they were joined by Captain Crofton and Captain Anderson, of the Engineers.*

* Captain Crofton was mortally wounded by the bursting of a shell, within three weeks afterwards, to the deep regret of all who knew him.

Hedley Vicars seemed peculiarly to enjoy these hours of social prayer. In the evening he met Major Ingram in Lieutenant Derman's tent, and these three Christian brothers read together the 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters of the Gospel of St John, and again united in prayer. The subject of the approaching day of humiliation was kept much in view. He had earnestly desired its appointment. In some of his recent letters, he had expressed his belief that until God was more honoured by us as a nation, in the ascription of victory to His favour, and in the acknowledgmeut of His chastening hand in defeat, we could scarcely expect complete success.

Well was the day observed when it came. He kept it as a solemn fast before the Lord. Within that tent there was a Holy of holies, for the presence of God was there; and from conscious, though lowly fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, he came forth to refresh the souls of others, as one who by Divine hands is made a king and a priest unto his God. The man of prayer is a man of power. Other men take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus; and a light from heaven shines into many a dark heart through one who is a living temple of the Holy Ghost.

After morning parade, Hedley Vicars walked with Major Ingram, to see the sunrise in the valley of the Tchernaya; and by the burning of their hearts within

them by the way, it seemed that "Jesus Himself drew nigh and went with them."

> "Jesus in heaven, Jesus in the heart,
> Heaven in the heart, the heart in heaven."

At eleven, and at three o'clock, services were held in Mr Smith's tent. Hedley Vicars had himself chosen the Psalms and Lessons, which he read, as well as the remainder of the service, with an earnest solemnity which impressed all present. "If it had been the Archbishop of Canterbury," said one, "he could not have done it better."

The evening was passed in company with his valued friend Mr Cay. The tone of that last conversation could not be forgotten by the survivor. It seemed as if the spirit of his young companion had already taken wing, "and was in heaven before he came at it; being swallowed up with the sight of angels, and with hearing of their melodious notes. Here, also, he had the City itself in view, and thought he heard all the bells therein to ring, to welcome him thereto. But, above all, the warm and joyful thoughts that he had about his own dwelling there with such company, and that for ever and ever —oh, by what tongue or pen can that glorious joy be expressed!" Late that night he wrote these words:—

"God bless all those whose exertions have been

the means of bringing about this day of national prayer. Who knows how many precious lives may not be spared, and what great success granted, sooner or later, in answer to the prayers of this day; for if the 'effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,' how much more may an abundant answer be expected to the prayers of England, offered up as they have been this day by all the Lord's people in the name of Jesus, and pleading His atoning blood and all-sufficient righteousness!

"I look for great results from the prayers that have ascended to heaven this day, and have been presented by our great Intercessor before the throne of God, and I am sure you do too, do you not, ever dearest mother-sister? I have felt this day to have been just like Sunday, and have derived much comfort from communion with my God and Saviour. We had two tent-services, in the morning at eleven, and in the afternoon at three o'clock; Vandeleur came both times. I spent the evening with Cay. I read Isaiah xli., and he prayed. We walked together during the day, and exchanged our thoughts about JESUS."

Thus the last word he ever wrote was the name he loved best—the name which is above every name; and which doubtless was the first to spring from his soul, in the fulness of adoration and praise, as he

entered into the presence of the King Eternal. One other fragment was found in his desk. It was addressed to her whom he loved with the full power of a true and manly heart; yet does it speak of joy and gladness from another source than that most tender love. Like the first disciples, of whom it is said, that they, not seeing the Lord Jesus, yet rejoiced in Him "with joy unspeakable, and full of glory," Hedley Vicars, led by the same Spirit, seems at this time almost to have tasted the first draught of that fountain of the water of life, whose streams make glad the City of God. In the full strength of his youth, yet actually on the verge of another world, his last words come to us with a power beyond that of death-bed sayings. Such a tone of *absolute satisfaction* is seldom heard in this world of unsatisfied longings.

"The greater part of another month is past, and here I am still kept by the protecting arm of the Almighty from all harm. I have been in many a danger by night and day since I last wrote to you, my own beloved; but the Lord has delivered me from them all, and not only so, but He has likewise kept me in perfect peace, and made me glad with the light of His countenance. In Jesus I find all I want of happiness or enjoyment, and as week after

week, and month after month roll by, I believe He is becoming more and more lovely in my eyes, and precious to my soul."

Twenty-four hours more, and his eyes had seen "the KING in His beauty."

CHAPTER XI.

The Victory.

"His soul to Him who gave it rose,
God led it to its long repose,
Its glorious rest.
And though the warrior's sun has set,
Its light shall linger round us yet,
Bright, radiant, blest."

Longfellow.

THE night of the 22d of March was dark and dreary. The wind rose high, and swept in stormy gusts across the Crimea. There was for a time a stillness over the three armies, like the calm before a tempest.

At the advanced post of the British forces, on the side nearest the French, was a detachment of the 97th Regiment, commanded by Captain Vicars. No watch-fire on that post of danger might cast its red light, as aforetime, upon the Book of God. Yet was that place of peril holy ground. Once more the night-breeze bore away the hallowed sounds of prayer. Once more the deep, earnest eyes of Hedley Vicars looked upward to that heaven in which his place was now prepared. Perhaps in that dark night he pictured a return to his country, to his home, to the chosen of his heart, and thought of all the loving welcomes which awaited him. But there are better things than these, dear as *they* are, which God hath prepared for them that love Him. Perhaps his spirit

took a loftier flight, and imagined the yet more joyful welcomes upon the eternal shores.

One stern duty more, O soldier and Christian! and realities more lovely and glorious than it has entered into the heart of man to conceive, shall satisfy thy soul. Fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore at God's right hand. Around thee, in a few moments, may be a host of foes; but the air is filled with chariots and horses of fire to carry thee home, to be numbered with God's saints in glory everlasting.

Soon after ten o'clock that night a loud firing commenced, and was sustained in the direction of the Victoria Redoubt, opposite the Malakhoff Tower. Taking advantage of the darkness of the night, a Russian force of 15,000 men issued from Sebastopol. Preserving a sullen silence, they approached from the Mamelon under cover of the fire of their ambuscades, and effected an entrance into the French advanced parallel, before any alarm could be given by the sentries. After a short but desperate struggle, the French were obliged to fall back on their reserves.

The columns of the enemy then marched along

the parallel, and came up the ravine on the right of the British lines, for the purpose of taking them in flank and rear. On their approach being observed, they were supposed to be the French, as the ravines separated the Allied armies. Hedley Vicars was the first to discover that they were Russians.

With a coolness of judgment which seems to have called forth admiration from all quarters, he ordered his men to lie down until the Russians came within twenty paces. Then, with his first war-shout, "Now 97th, on your pins, and charge!" himself foremost in the conflict, he led on his gallant men to victory, charging two thousand with a force of barely two hundred. A bayonet wound in the breast only fired his courage the more; and again his voice rose high, "Men of the 97th, follow me!" as he leaped that parapet he had so well defended, and charged the enemy down the ravine.

One moment a struggling moonbeam fell upon his flashing sword, as he waved it through the air, with his last cheer for his men—"*This* way, 97th!" The next, the strong arm which had been uplifted, hung powerless by his side, and he fell amidst his enemies. But friends followed fast. His men fought their way through the ranks of the Russians, to defend the parting life of the leader they loved. Noble brave men! to whom all who loved Hedley Vicars owe an unforgotten debt of gratitude and honour.

In their arms they bore him back, amidst shouts of a victory, so dearly bought.

An officer of the Royal Engineers stopped them on their way, to ask whom they carried. The name brought back to him the days of his boyhood. The early playmate, since unseen, who now lay dying before him, was one whose father's deathbed had been attended and comforted by his own father as minister and friend.*

Captain Browne found a stretcher, and placing his friend upon it, cooled his fevered lips with a draught of water. That "cup of cold water shall in no wise lose its reward."

To each inquiry, Hedley Vicars answered cheerfully that he believed his wound was slight. But a main artery had been severed, and the life-blood flowed fast.

A few paces onward, and he faintly said, "Cover my face; cover my face!"

What need for covering, under the shadow of that dark night? Was it not a sudden consciousness that he was entering into the presence of the Holy God, before whom the cherubims veiled their faces?

As the soldiers laid him down at the door of his tent, a welcome from the armies of the sky

* The Dean of Lismore.

sounded in his hearing. He had fallen asleep in Jesus, to awake up after His likeness, and be satisfied with it.

We "asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever."

APPENDIX.

"In Memoriam."

"His memory long will live alone
In all our hearts as mournful light
That broods above the fallen sun,
And dwells in heaven half the night."

Tennyson.

A PASSAGE in the despatch from Lord Raglan, published on Good Friday, April 6, closed the last door of hope that there might be some mistake in the telegraphic notice of Captain Vicars' death, communicated by the evening papers of the 4th:—

"*Camp before Sebastopol, March* 24, 1855.

"Early in the night a serious attack was made upon the works of our Allies in front of the Victoria Redoubt, opposite the Malakhoff Tower.

"The night was very dark, and the wind so high, that the firing which took place, and which was very heavy, could scarcely be heard in the British camp; it is, therefore, difficult to speak with certainty of what occurred from anything that could be heard or observed at the moment.

"It appears, however, that the Russians, after attacking the head of the sap which the French are carrying on towards the Mamelon, fell with two heavy masses on their new parallel, to the rear of which they succeeded in penetrating and momentarily possessing themselves of, after a gallant resistance on the part of our Allies.

"Having broken through, they passed along the parallel and in rear of it, until they came in contact with the troops stationed in our advanced parallel extending into the ravine from the right of our advance, where it connects with the French trench.

"The enemy was here met by detachments of the 77th and 97th Regiments, forming part of the guard of the trenches, who, although thus taken suddenly both in flank and rear, behaved with the utmost gallantry and coolness.

"The detachment of the 97th, which was on the extreme right, and which consequently first came in contact with the enemy, repulsed the attack at the point of the bayonet.

"They were led by Captain Vicars, who, unfortunately, lost his life on the occasion; and I am assured that nothing could be more distinguished than the gallantry and good example which he set to the detachment under his command."

By the same post, their tone according with the solemn and hallowed associations of the day, the following letters confirmed the fatal tidings:—

TO LORD RAYLEIGH.

"*Before Sebastopol.*

"My Lord,—It is with the deepest sorrow that I write to announce the death of Captain Vicars, of the 97th Regiment. He was killed last night in the trenches, while gallantly cheering on his men to the attack of a body of the enemy, who, taking advantage of the darkness of the night, got close into our trenches. From what I can glean of the affair, he rushed bravely into the middle of them, knocked down two, and was in the act of striking a third, when one of them shot him through his right arm, high up close to the shoulder; the ball divided the principal artery, and he must soon have bled to death; therefore, it is a melancholy satisfaction to know that his sufferings were short.

"I cannot express my own sorrow, and that of the Regiment, at the loss of so valuable an officer, further than to say, as regards myself, I feel that I have lost a brother—it was in his society I felt the happiest: as regards the regiment, he cannot be replaced. Contemplating his melancholy loss in the light of a Christian, we indeed ought not

to sorrow as those who have no hope, for I feel sure no officer in the whole army was more prepared to meet his Saviour. I write to your Lordship, as he told one of the officers that his mother was staying with you; and gave your direction, in case (as he said) of anything happening to him.

"I am, &c.,

"T. O. W. INGRAM,

"Major, 97th Regiment."

From an Officer in the Royal Artillery.

"*Camp before Sebastopol, March* 23, 1855.

"Much do I thank you for your very kind letter of the 23d of February. The information it contained concerning a Day of Humiliation having been determined upon, was most acceptable; and in itself tended not a little to cheer our spirits, of late, by many circumstances, much cast down.

"That kind letter deserved a far different answer from that which I am now called upon to send. Sad, sad indeed, are the tidings I have to communicate. But I know that, painful and severe as the blow must prove, it is much better that the worst should be told, in a direct and certain form, by letter, than to have your feelings tortured unnecessarily by the uncertain reports, which could not fail to reach you through the newspapers. On this account, I feel sure you will forgive me for taking upon myself to break to you—one of his dearest and most valued friends—the melancholy news of the death of our dear companion in arms, and brother in the Lord, Captain Vicars, 97th.

"Yes, our good and gracious God has seen fit, at this, His own good time, to take unto himself the soul of our beloved friend. Yet, if we find in these words much to cause deep affliction, surely they contain much of comfort also. Our loss and sorrow are great; but his gain and bliss are greater. Dear Vicars is the second of our little band who has been removed to a higher and better world within a fortnight. Captain Craigie, R. E., we lost about ten days

ago. Surely these are warnings to us. 'Prepare to meet thy God' is written as with the finger of God. May He himself prepare our souls, by fixing our wandering hearts more entirely on himself!

"The action of last night—I might almost dignify it by the name of 'battle'—has been a glorious and decisive victory. It was Inkermann on a small scale—an attack in very great force, and on all points; and everywhere they were beaten back with vigour and heavy loss. I saw at least three hundred Russian bodies lying on the field. We calculated that their loss must have exceeded twelve hundred men. The French lost five hundred, and the English four officers and about fifty men.

"Vicars was in the advanced parallel of our right attack, with a picquet of his regiment. The enemy attacked the French lines close alongside where he lay; a ravine only separated them. They at first drove back the French, and part of them then turned to their right, crossed the ravine, and took our trench in flank. We were unprepared, and at first thought the advancing body was one of the French; but Vicars found out they were the Russians, and ordered his men to lie down, and wait till they came within twenty paces. When the enemy was close enough, Vicars shouted, 'Now, 97th, on your pins, and charge!' They poured in a volley, charged, and drove the Russians quite out of the trench. Vicars himself struck down two Russians, and was in the act of cutting down a third with his sword, when another man, who was quite close (for the coat was singed), fired. The ball entered his uplifted right arm, close to where it joins the shoulder, and he fell. The main artery was divided, and he must have bled to death in a few minutes.

"Thus his end was as peaceful and painless as a soldier's death could be; and nothing could have been more noble, devoted, and glorious than his conduct in this, his first and last engagement. Surely this must afford some consolation to those who loved him.

"He was universally beloved; and none can doubt who knew him that he is now in the presence of that great and

holy God whom on earth he deeply loved, and earnestly and successfully sought to serve.

"Poor fellow! he chose the Psalms and Lessons for the preceding day (the Day of Humiliation), and read the service, when several of us met together to worship God. All present must have noticed the fervour of his manner. Little did we think he was so soon to be numbered with the dead.

"Let us not sorrow for our beloved brother as those without hope. We have a good and sure hope, nay, a firm *faith*, that we shall meet again. . . . .

"May God comfort you all."

The following letter was written to a mother, without any idea on the part of the writer that the sorrowing hearts of Hedley Vicars' relatives and friends would be warmed and comforted by its overflowing affection to his memory:—

TO LADY MACGREGOR.

"*Camp before Sebastopol, March* 23, 1855.

"DEAREST MOTHER,—This is a dark and sorrowful day with me; my heart is wrung, my eyes red and hot with crying. I feel gloomy and sorrowful altogether. My very dear friend Vicars was killed last night! The Russians made a sortie; and while gallantly leading on a handful of our men, to charge them outside our works, he was mortally wounded by a ball striking his right breast. He died soon after, and is now enjoying a glorious rest in the presence of his Saviour. I do not pity him. What more could we wish for him? He was fully prepared for the most sudden death, and he died bravely fighting and doing his duty. But my heart bleeds for the loss of my dearest friend, and for the sake of his poor mother and family.

"Such a death became such a life,—and such a soldier. The most gallant, the most cheerful, the happiest, the most universally respected officer, and the most consistent Christian soldier, has been taken from us by that bullet; and I know not how to live without him. He was my truest friend, my most cheerful companion, and my friendly adviser on all

occasions. But, as his Sergeant remarked bitterly this morning, 'He was too good to live.'

"Oh! how many happy little schemes of mine does this at once put an end to! I had fondly hoped that we should live to go home, and that I might bring my dear departed friend to you, and proudly shew him as a specimen of what a model soldier should be. But God's ways are *not* our ways. He spared him from the horrible death of suffocation by charcoal, for a few months, that he might die a soldier's death.

"Noble fellow! he rushed in front of his men; and his powerful arm made more than one Russian fall, before that cruel bullet brought him down. It must have been fired close to him, for his coat was singed. I never knew how much I loved him, until he was so nearly dying of the charcoal. When I heard, at daylight this morning, that Vicars had been brought home dead, you may imagine my excessive grief. I loved that man as dearly as a brother; and it seems that I almost hear his voice sounding in my ears, as he read (two days ago) the Service,—when some of us met on the day of humiliation.

"There was a little locket which he always wore round his neck; and I remember, when he heard we were to come here, he said, 'We should all be prepared to give directions what we wished done in case we get killed; for instance I have got a little book of Psalms and a locket, which I would wish sent home, in case I die!' Poor fellow! I remembered this; and as I took the locket (a small gold one, which opens like a watch, and has a small picture)—sprinkled with his life-blood—I cried so that I thought I would get ill. . . . . .

". . . . . Oh! his poor mother and sisters, that he loved so dearly. But she is a Christian: and has lived to see her once wild and reckless son come to the fold of Jesus, and prove his sincerity by a long, unswerving, and consistent course. I also cut a lock of his fine curly hair this morning, as I knew his mother would like to get it. If I was to try to write all the good that my beloved friend did, I should not have room. How he fearlessly visited and spoke to the men

in the worst times of the cholera: but, as he told me, he got his reward,—for the soldiers' dying lips besought blessings on his head. Oh, how happy he is now! Such a death, and such glory now! Even in death his habitual happy smile did not forsake him. The Lord knew when and how to take him; but it is a severe and unspeakably painful trial to me.

"EVERY ONE liked and respected Vicars; even those who did not agree with his strict religion; and those who had known him so long as the leader of every mad riot, when, after closely watching him for years, and finding that, once enlisted in Christ's army, he NEVER flinched—at last gave in, and acknowledged that Vicars, at any rate, was a true Christian. How sadly we shall miss him in all our little meetings! O God, help me to bear this sad affliction! I can't go on. He died gloriously, and now he is perfectly happy. God help his afflicted family, and help me also, to bow submissively to His will!

"Our men got great praise for the fight last night; but who would not go anywhere with such a leader?

"Somehow, I passed a restless, almost sleepless night, and I then heard different arrivals of our wounded men, but did not know that my poor—no, my happy—friend was amongst the number, until parade at daybreak. If you have not lost that crocus which Vicars sent a few weeks ago, please to keep it. Oh! blessed are the dead that die in the Lord!

"Farewell, Vicars, my loved companion! I knew when he went into action he would shew that a Christian soldier was a brave, as well as a happy man. I do not exactly know how it all was. I only vouch for the above facts, and the terrible reality of poor Vicars' noble frame lying in the hospital tent, where I saw it. We are in tents here, too. God bless you, dearest mother, and may He sanctify this severe trial to my soul.

"Your own
"DOUGLAS."

Six months more, and Douglas Macgregor and Hedley

Vicars had met again. "Lovely and pleasant in their lives, in their death they were not (long) divided."

Bright as the young survivor's Christian life had been before, it cleared into yet fuller lustre during those six short months, ere his sun went down at noon. He regularly visited the hospitals, to read and pray with the sick and dying, and in every way sought to follow in the steps of that beloved friend, over whose grave he had wept with the strength of manly affection and the tenderness of a woman's love.

On the death of Lieutenant Derman, in the month of August, Lieutenant Macgregor, at the age of twenty, was appointed Adjutant to his regiment,—an office for which his remarkable energy, sweetness of temper, and devoted military ardour peculiarly qualified him.

On the fatal 8th of September, twice he fought his way into the Redan, the second time to come no more out. He was found far advanced on that red ground, lying by a cannon, in the sleep of death.

"THE TRUMPET SHALL SOUND, AND THE DEAD SHALL BE RAISED."

The next letter is from one whose own abounding labours of love amongst the ungodly, the sick, and the dying, in that land lying under the shadow of death, rendered him peculiarly open to the refreshing influence of even passing contact with such a spirit as that of Hedley Vicars :—

"*Balaklava, March* 25, 1855.

"My heart is filled with sorrow. I am deeply pained. I am much distressed. And well do I know I write to one whose soul shall be filled with grief—grief which only Jesus can relieve, sorrow which only His hand can wipe away.

"From dear Dr Cay's letter of the 23d, you have heard of the death of much-loved Captain Vicars. It has come over us a heavy blow. It has taught us solemn lessons. It has caused the deepest affliction. We seek grace to bow to the will of the Lord, and to feel His ways are not our ways, nor

His thoughts our thoughts. You know the circumstances." (Then follows a statement of the facts already given.) "He fell asleep in Jesus. His work was done on earth—his race was run—his conflict ended—his crown awaiting—and now he wears it.

"I heard of his death on the evening of the 23d, and yesterday hastened to the front. I met one and another of the 97th, and the deepest sorrow filled each heart. I cannot express it. Rough hands wiped the starting tears away at the mention of his name, and one after another told me of the good he had sought to do him.

"On reaching the encampment of the 97th, I saw soldiers digging a grave. It was his. I stood beside them, and spoke to them as well as I could for sorrow, and remained till it was finished. Oh! how my heart bled for his dear mother and sisters at home! The poor soldiers seemed to feel this, and said they could not forget his dear sister's parting counsels to them ere they left England. It seems to have made impression on them.

"He was buried at three o'clock yesterday afternoon. All the officers of the 97th were there, with some friends from other regiments, and a large number of the men of his own regiment. I stood by Dr Cay, and Captain Vandeleur was opposite. A deep, very deep solemnity prevailed, as the Chaplain read the Funeral Service. It was a touching, solemn hour. Yes, he had all earthly honour, all deep respect. The mournful procession went home, and dear Dr Cay and I went together on the road to Balaklava, talking of our loss, and of his dear mother and sisters and friends at home, and of those pleasures and joys he now possesses in the calm, pure, holy heaven on high.

"Being all day with them, I had opportunity of seeing many of the men of the 97th. He was the most beloved officer of the regiment, and not only in his own regiment, —it seems his name is well known now throughout the army, and his loss deeply felt. I could here pause to give expression to my own feelings. I feel I have lost a dear friend, one

to whom my heart was much knit. I had anticipated happy days with him in this land, and felt I should be much strengthened. It was not to be so. Soon we shall follow. Oh! may the faltering steps be quickened, and the soul be made to mount up with wings as eagles, longing, panting, thirsting more ardently and more constantly for the living God.

"I had visited him three times, and remained long with him. On Tuesday, the 20th, we had gone together to Major Ingram's tent—Dr Cay also being present, and another officer. It was put on me to read and pray, and it was good to be among them. He, with Dr Cay, conveyed me a long way. Our conversation turned chiefly on the happiness of glorified spirits and their enjoyments. He was much delighted at the prospect of the National Fast Day on the following day. It was the sweetest walk I have ever had. Little did I think it was to be the last with him.

"On the 21st he met with others, and passed the day in fasting and prayer, and very pleasantly. My spirit was with him and the little band. Next night he was in glory. Yes, I feel *sure of this.* It seemed to me he was peculiarly ripe for it. He was growing much in the Divine life, and it must afford peculiar satisfaction to you to know (as he told me in that last walk), your letters had been the means of greatly strengthening him and helping him forward. To God be the glory. Yes, he has fallen as a soldier and as a Christian. The Church of God, his dear mother, and sisters, and Christian friends, shall miss him much. Yet we cannot, we would not recall him if we could. God had need of him. He is removed from the evil to come. The white robe is now his —the crown of victory—the song that shall never end. Tears may give place to joy. True, it was not amidst kind friends or on downy bed he died. It was in the deadly charge and in the battle's strife. Yet it is all one. He fell as a Christian, nobly doing his duty. He awaits to give us a welcome on high. Kindly recognition shall take place. He needs us to

swell the song, to help to praise. Lord, more grace, more grace, that we may follow him as he followed Jesus!

"Dr Cay is to get a stone to mark his grave, that it may be well known. He lies close to the mile-stone on the Woronzoff road to Sebastopol, 200 yards from the Picquet House.

"I feel deeply for his mother and sisters—I cannot say how deeply. May they know much of the sympathy of Jesus! You, too, shall need it, for you have lost a brother.

"Will you kindly offer my Christian love to all at Beckenham, especially to your dear honoured father. Mercy, grace, abundant grace, be with you.

"Yours in the bonds of Jesus,

"DUNCAN MATHESON."

From a Private in the 97th.

"*Camp before Sebastopol, March* 23, 1855.

"MY DEAR WIFE,—On the night of the 22d we had a visit from the Russians. A strong force pushed up to our advanced works, and succeeded in getting into the trenches where there was a weak point. Several of our regiment got killed, and amongst them was our gallant Captain, poor Mr Vicars, who was so deeply loved by all the regiment. Even the officers almost all cried the morning after the affair.

"He got a bayonet wound first, and then with a handful of his men drove the Russians off and out on their ground; for where the affair happened is close to their own batteries. He was seen to use his sword bravely, and cut down two men, and had his sword raised to serve another the same, when a bullet struck him in the breast, and he shouted out that he was only slightly wounded. But, alas! poor fellow, he fell, and died soon after. The Russians would have carried him off and stript him of all he was worth, but our gallant lads bravely defended him, and carried him off the field.

"We had four killed and four wounded, besides fourteen missing, which we expect were taken prisoners, as we took a

great many Russians, and a great many were killed. Amongst them some officers were killed at our mortar batteries in attempting to spike them. For several days here the Russians kept very quiet—did not so much as fire a shot. We could not tell what they were up to.

"Poor Captain Vicars will be deeply regretted by all who knew him, but I know his soul is in heaven.

"So no more at present, my dear wife, from your affectionate husband,

"JOHN COTTERALL, 97TH."

From a private in the Coldstream Guards, formerly a Crystal Palace workman, who enlisted principally with the hope of being sent to the Crimea, that he might see Captain Vicars again :—

"*St George's Barracks, April* 6.

"DEAR LADY,—When I opened the paper it made the tears come into my eyes, for to hear that my beloved friend had left this world. He is gone to sleep in Jesus. I wish I had been by his side, and seen him fall asleep. But I know that he is in greater glory than is to be had in this world. When last I saw him in Beckenham amongst us, little did I think that it *was the last.* But he fell in duty and glory.

"I expect we shall leave for the East in a day or so. We are all at a minute's notice. I have all the little books you gave me, packed up in my kit.

"I was always living in the hopes of seeing that beloved, respected Captain, and honoured brother in the Lord, out there, when I got a chance of going out to him; now I am disappointed. But I will put no trust in princes to get me to heaven; but I look on the blood of Jesus on the cross. I will trust in Him, and He will never forsake me. For Jesus says—

"'All ye that thirst, approach the stream
Where living waters flow.'

"Our beloved friend is drinking of those living waters now.

"So no more at present from your humble and grateful friend,

"JAMES KELLY, Coldstream Guards."

TO MRS VICARS.

"*Beckenham, April* 7, 1855.

"DEAR MRS VICARS,—I am not writing to you merely a letter of sympathy. I believe I can fully enter into your grief. Since the sudden death of a dear child of my own—darling Lucy's mother—I have never felt so thoroughly heart-stricken.

"That brave soldier, that eminent Christian, that active servant of Christ, that loving heart had wound itself round my heart. I could weep all day; but this is wrong. Let me think of the honour conferred upon him in life; of the easy passage in death; of the bliss of his spirit in paradise; and of the brilliant example he has left behind! I will try to think of him, rather than of myself, or even of those so dear to me. But their sorrows pierce me. But let me rather think of the wisdom and love of *His* government who, indeed, wept at the tomb of Lazarus, and, therefore, I may weep; but intended that tomb to give a higher display of the Divine glory. Oh, let us trust where we cannot trace, and believe that we shall discover only love in our most painful feelings here.

"Yet a little while and Rev. vii. 13–17, and xxi. 4, will be fulfilled: and there we shall meet our beloved ones who have gone before (1 Thess. iv. 13–18); and the presence of the Lord will be the sunshine upon all. I pray God comfort you and your dear children, and dear Lord and Lady Rayleigh.

"Believe me to be, dear Mrs Vicars, yours faithfully and affectionately, "WM. MARSH."

Extract of a Letter from Lord Panmure to Lord Rayleigh.

"*War Department, April* 21, 1855.

" . . . . . I cannot but regard the death of Captain Vicars as a national calamity, as it has deprived the Queen and the nation of the service of an officer who was distinguished by his gallantry and devotion to the service." . . . .

Extract of a Letter from the Rev. Dr Blackwood.

"*Scutari, April* 30, 1855.

"Occasionally, in the midst of the horrors of war, one meets traits of character which are very pleasing. You will have seen in the newspapers some accounts of the death of Captain Vicars, of the 97th Regiment, while gallantly repulsing a night sortie of the Russians at the head of his men in the trenches. This *was a good man*, and in his instance is realised the promise, 'The memory of the just is blessed.' In passing through one of my wards the day after the news of his death had arrived at Scutari, I met with two or three of his men, who spoke to me with the most earnest and affectionate interest, inquiring the truth of the sad news. They all bore testimony to his excellence, and to his unceasing and zealous endeavours to impress them with religious sentiments and instruct them in religious truth. He appears to have acted as a father and evangelist to his men. One very interesting youth wept freely while he spoke of his own former wild and thoughtless course, from which he had been reclaimed by the exhortations and instructions of Captain Vicars, who used to read and expound the Scriptures and pray with his men individually, as well as sometimes collectively. This young man received religious books from me with evident intentions to use and profit by them, and told me how Captain Vicars had exhorted him to be useful in speaking a word to his thoughtless comrades, as well as in keeping his own faith. What a blessing is such a character as Captain Vicars'; and I believe there are not a few of the like spirit just now in our army."

Extract of a Letter from Private Mortimer Lovell, 77th.

"The loss of Captain Vicars is felt by many—*many* a one out here. But *he* rejoices, and enjoys the fruits of his heavy labours in the loving bosom of his God and Saviour. Willingly would I have resigned my poor life to have prevented the deadly blow.

"I wept for his loss, but now I envy him his glory.

"I send you some clay I got on his grave, and a rough sketch (but true) of his tombstone. His men have ornamented the grave with shells, and flowers are already growing there."

From Captain Vicars' Servant in the Regiment.

"*Camp before Sebastopol, May* 20, 1855.

"MADAM,—The name of Captain Vicars is engraven on the hearts of the private soldiers of the 97th, with feelings of love and gratitude. I believe there is not a man in the regiment but would have run any risk to have saved his life. I, as his servant, can assure you, he was a brother to me, and not as a master, though no gentleman could be more honoured and respected. I feel a happiness when I think of the home his soul is now enjoying.

"I am requested by the soldiers of the 97th to say how pleased and thankful they will be for the little books about him when they reach; and I believe there are many of the men will keep them till the day they die.

"I remain yours respectfully,

"RICHARD YOUNG, 97th."

From an Officer of the 97th.

"*May* 22, 1855.

" . . . I can't tell you how much I felt the loss of poor Vicars. Ever since I joined the regiment he was one of my best friends in every sense of the word, always trying to do

me good, both by example and advice; however, I have no doubt the poor fellow is much happier where he is; he fell, as he wished to fall, at the head of his men, leading them on to victory. I can't tell you how much his company loved him; and if you were to see the poor fellow's grave, how nicely they have done it round with stones and shells, shewing in the only way they could how deeply they felt his loss!

"At twelve o'clock on the night of the 22d of March, his servant rushed into my tent, saying they were bringing his master home wounded. He must have died just before he arrived in Camp, for at the Picquet House he asked the men that were carrying him to put a cloak over him, as he felt cold, and when I saw him a minute afterwards he was dead. He died an easy death,—not the slightest sign of suffering about him. He appeared as if he was in a tranquil sleep; his poor servant and the soldier that carried him were all in tears. I never saw an officer so much loved as he was. Many a vow of vengeance was uttered, and no doubt will be kept when they get the chance. I used to have such work to make him take his pistols; and that night I dined out, and he did not take them. I have got his fur coat, in which the poor fellow was shot, which I am keeping in memory of one of the dearest friends I ever had. He has been a heavy loss to us all, but at the time we can't help envying him the glorious way in which he fell, and the certainty of his now being so much happier, and in a better place than this wretched world of sin and sorrow." . . . .

From one of those soldiers of the 97th who fought their way through the ranks of the Russians, as they closed round Captain Vicars when he fell. The writer is a Roman Catholic:—

"*Camp before Sebastopol, June* 28, 1855.

"MADAM,—I hope you will excuse the liberty I take in acknowledging the receipt of your very kind note of the 20th of May 1855, and its enclosure of half a sovereign; also the handsome good book you were so kind as to send me. I am

sure I have not done anything to deserve such kindness; what I have done in striving to save the late beloved Captain Vicars any one soldier in the Regiment would have done, for he was beloved by every one who knew him. His constant care was the best way he could contribute to the comfort of all under his command. As our Adjutant, he was loved by every one in the regiment, and, as Captain of No. 4 Company, he was more so by his Company. There is scarcely a man in the regiment who would not have gladly laid down his own life to save *his;* and we all feel sorrow when we think of our victory on the 22d of March, on account of his loss.

"I am sorry that I cannot express my thanks for your kind wishes and your handsome present, a book not much read by the humble classes of my persuasion; but your book I will read and study, so that I might become worthy to meet your beloved friend, and our no less beloved friend, in glory.

"The letter you so kindly sent me I am sending to my mother, for fear that, through its smallness, I might lose it; and if it should please the Lord to take me, I have given directions to have the Bible sent also. It is not for the intrinsic value that I prize them. No! it is the pride I feel in an humble individual like me to have my name coupled with all that was good. All our officers are kind and good, but he was best, and most beloved.

"I, and every one that has heard of your kindness, sincerely sympathise in your loss. I most respectfully again beg you will forgive my presumption in writing to you in return for your kindness, but I felt my debt to you so much that I could not but thank you. I humbly hope you will excuse me for trespassing on your time so long; I am only sorry that I cannot thank you as I should.

"I beg to remain,

"Your very obedient humble servant,

"J. O'Rielly,

"Private, No. 3 Company, 97th Regiment."

From the Widowed Mother of a Soldier of the 97th, of whom Major Welsford thus wrote :—

"Benjamin Kyberd distinguished himself on the night of the 22d of March, in the trenches before Sebastopol, in charging upon the Russians and carrying off a wounded officer,—in which he received a musket-ball in the leg."

"*February* 19, 1856.

"DEAR MADAM,—I hope you will pardon the liberty I have taken of writing to a lady that I am quite a stranger to, but it is regarding my late son, Benjamin Kyberd, 97th Regiment, who, in assisting to rescue Captain Vicars from the Russians in the trenches, on the 22d of March 1855, received his death wound. It has been a very severe trial to me, being my youngest son, the last of seven children, and I have been a widow twenty-three years.

"One of the sergeants of the 97th, a particular friend of my son's, wrote to me, and sent a Testament which Captain Vicars presented to my son when they were at Greece,—wrote in it, 'Benjamin Kyberd, from a friend,' with a book-mark in it, 'Think of me,'—which I most highly prize.

"I cannot but express my gratitude to a kind and heavenly Father for my son having the privilege of hearing the Word of God from the lips of such a pious man as Captain Vicars, who was an ornament to the Christian character, and is now enjoying the fruit of his labours.

"My dear son was the child of many prayers, and was brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord. He wrote to me when they landed at the Crimea, and said, 'My dear Mother, I expect we shall soon have to commence with the Russians; and that will be a fearful day to some, for many fine young men will be hurried into eternity, and it may be your poor son's lot to fall. If it should be so, I can only commit my soul into the hands of a kind and merciful Redeemer, who

has promised to cast out none that flee to Him for refuge. Therefore,' he said, 'let me entreat you not to fret.'

" I can only hope and trust the few days he had to live (as his sufferings were very great) that he was enabled to cast himself at the feet of Jesus Christ, hoping in the mercy of a faithful God, ' whose mercy endureth for ever.'

" From your most obedient and humble servant,

" ANN KYBERD."

The following letter will be read with melancholy interest, as it is from the pen of one who fell foremost in the Redan, whilst gallantly leading the forlorn-hope, on the 8th of September, and was followed to a soldier's grave with no common regret :—

Camp, June 29, 1855.

" MY DEAR LADY RAYLEIGH,—My brother officers have requested me to acknowledge your kindness, and to thank you very much for your remembrance of them in forwarding the books descriptive of the life of their poor friend and fellow-soldier, Captain Vicars. Believe me, no one was, or could be, more regretted than he was ; for, anxious, zealous, and attentive to his duties, he was also most cheerful, self-denying, and obliging to his friends and companions. The narrative truly states, that whilst he entered with all his heart into the interests and duties of a soldier, his lips and life held one unchanging story of the love of Christ.

" It must be a very great source of consolation to his mother to know that, in all this army, none, as far as human observation can judge, was more prepared to meet his Maker.

" I was not in the trench the night he suffered ; but hearing that some wounded men had been sent up, I had risen and gone to the hospital with the doctor : whilst there, I was informed that he was being brought in, and hastening to meet him, found, poor fellow, that he had breathed his last—as his bearers informed me, calmly and quietly, having spoken a few minutes before I met them.

"I must beg you to convey my condolence to his poor mother, to whom I would have written at the time, had I known her address; but I was very busy, the regiment having just shifted ground, and being much pressed with duty, I left the correspondence to a personal and intimate friend of his, Major Ingram.

"Believe me, my dear Lady Rayleigh, most truly to remain yours,

"AUGUSTUS F. WELSFORD,
"Major Commanding 97th Regiment,"

"Then let us be content to leave behind us
So much; which yet we leave not quite behind;
For the bright memories of the holy dead,
The blessed ones departed, shine on us
Like the pure splendours of some clear large star,
Which pilgrims, travelling onward, at their back
Leave, and at every moment see not now:
Yet, whensoe'er they list, may pause and turn,
And with its glories gild their faces still.
Or, as beneath a northern sky is seen
The sunken sunset living in the west,
A tender radiance there surviving long,
Which has not faded all away before
The flaming banners of the morn advance
Over the summits of the Orient hills."*

In the majority of the few extracts quoted in this chapter, from a large number of letters of nearly equal interest, the 97th Regiment have borne their own testimony to their value for Hedley Vicars.

* Trench.

In conclusion, the writer of these memorials would venture to repeat, with a deeper meaning, his own last words to his faithful men, "THIS WAY, 97TH!" And would add a humble prayer, not only for that gallant regiment (in which all who loved Hedley Vicars must ever feel a peculiar interest), but also for every soldier in the British army, that each may tread the same path to endless glory, by finding HIM who is "the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE;" that, taught of the Holy Spirit, as this young soldier was, they may learn, as he did, to follow Jesus "in the blessed steps of His most holy life;" and may at last inherit with him those pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore.

"*If any man serve me, let him follow me;* AND WHERE I AM THERE SHALL MY SERVANT BE. *If any man serve me,* HIM WILL MY FATHER HONOUR." —(John xii.)

THE END.

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